

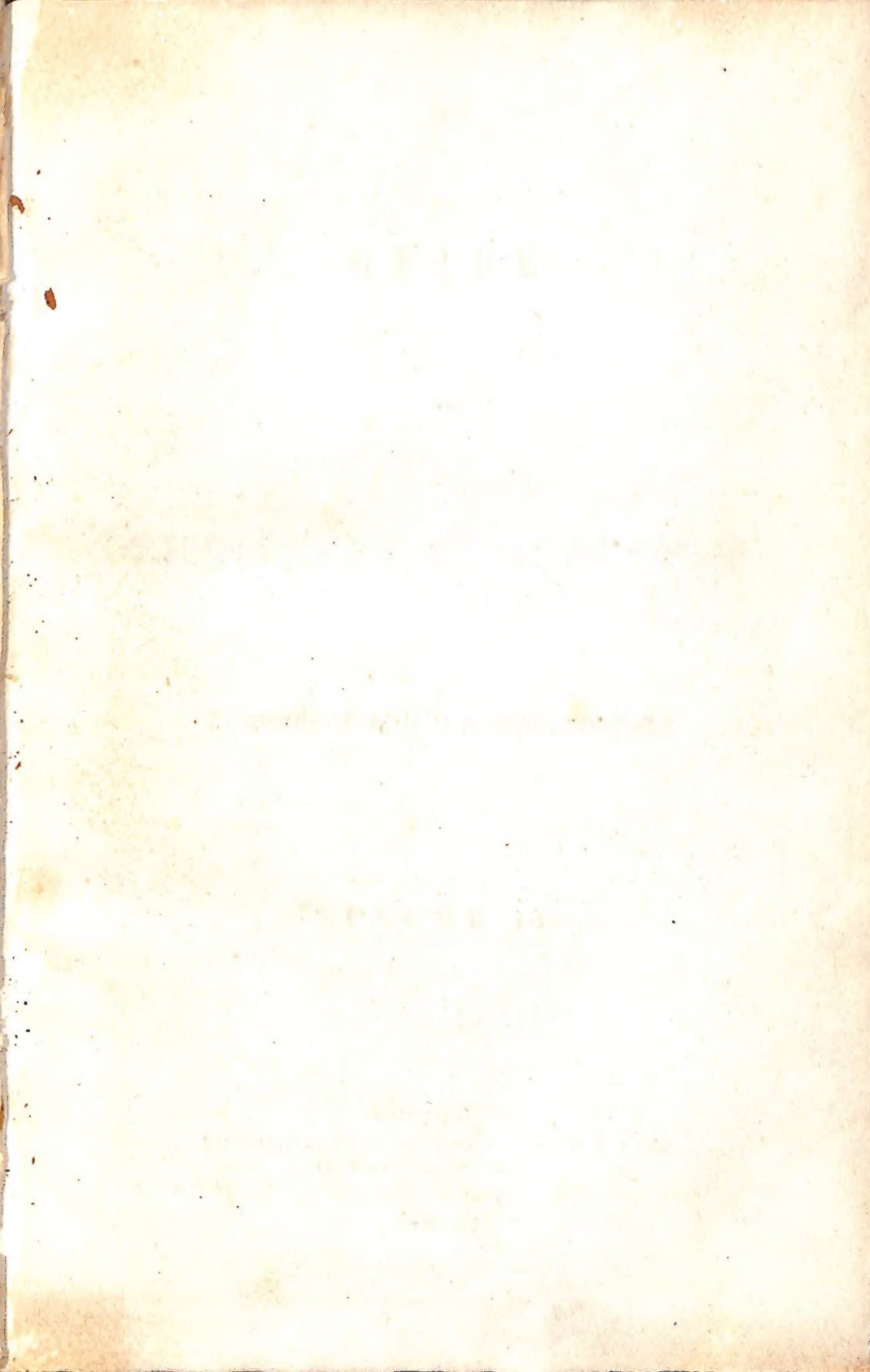


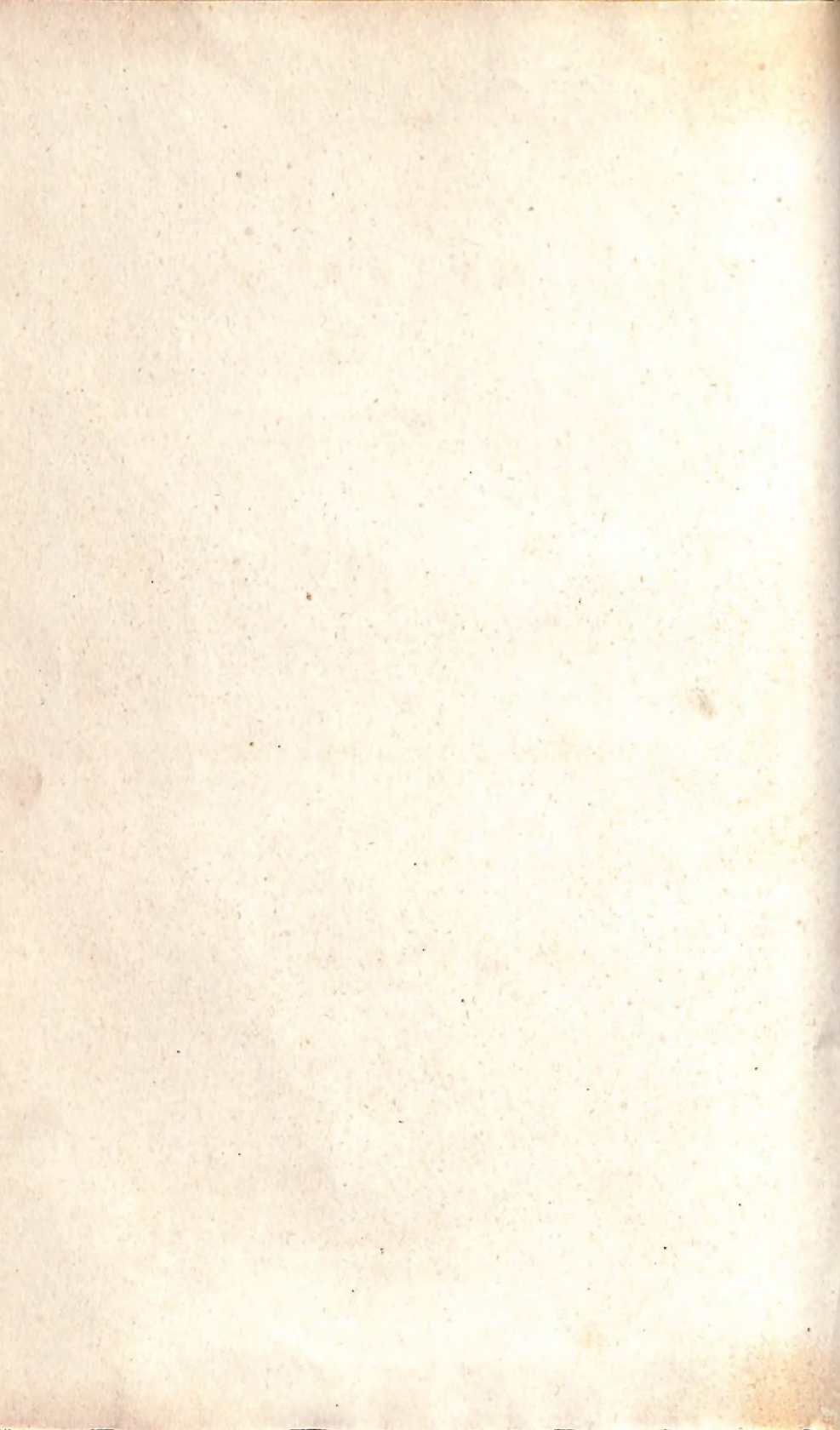


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THE
GUIDE
TO
CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

T. MERRITT AND D. S. KING, EDITORS.

VOLUME II.

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GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

JULY, 1840.

NO. 1.

GOSPEL PURITY:

A SERMON, BY THE REV. JOHN LINDSEY, OF THE NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," 2 Cor. vii. 1.

The simple declaration, that the gospel is an institution designed by infinite wisdom to redeem mankind from the dominion of sin, is sufficient to inspire the most enlarged expectation of the extent of that salvation which it reveals.

The words I have read in your hearing are taken from that part of the revelation of God's word which was made through one who was an illustrious monument of the power of divine grace, in the elevation of guilty, fallen, and perishing man.

In the history of the last of the apostles, there is exhibited a sudden, rapid, and amazing transition from the lowest state of sin to a height of holiness and wisdom, never yet surpassed by any mortal,—a height so eminent that he is permitted, under the influence of divine inspiration, to propose himself as a model to the world. "Follow me, as I follow Christ." "Those things, which ye have both learned and received; and heard and seen in me, do." Even if the text before us were communicated to the church independently of the rest of scripture, with what expectation would it influence the mind? "Having these promises,"—what promises? such promises as furnish ground for the Christian to expect a complete salvation from sin, an entire cleansing from all "filthiness of the flesh and spirit," and perfect holiness. This is the interesting and important subject we are to discuss this evening. In doing which we shall endeavor to show,—

I. *What are the nature and extent of the moral purity required in the text.*

First, as to its nature. It is a state of entire holiness, which excludes from the mind every principle opposing the divine nature and government.

The terms "flesh and spirit" comprehend all the faculties of the mind and affections of the heart; in a word, the whole man in his sentient, intellectual, moral and social nature.

This nature, in all its developments previous to regeneration, is unholy. It is, therefore, to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ entirely, that we are indebted for our purification, for all those holy principles, by which the mind acquires a spiritual union with the Deity, and is qualified for the high destinies of the eternal world. This state of purity implies not only a deliverance from that enmity of heart which arrays the whole man against the letter and spirit of the divine law, but also from that moral and spiritual defilement which extends to every part of the mind.

In this state the soul is not only delivered from the dominion of sin, but is freed from its very existence.

It implies the possession of that gracious power by which the soul moves within the circle of the divine influence, and perpetually ascends toward Jehovah as the centre of all true purity and bliss. His nature and perfections are its supreme delight. In its objects of approbation and disapprobation, delight and hatred, it is governed by the will of God. That unholy selfishness, which predominated in the mind and presented nothing but a personal interest as the origin and end of every act in life, has been destroyed; and those pure and holy principles actuate the heart, which refer all that is said and done to God as the Judge of all men.

This entire cleansing from all impurity is indispensable to deep and constant communion with God. Every unholy influence leads the mind from God, and in the same proportion as it is followed, as the effect of distance on natural objects, leaves a mist of darkness around his character and government. Hence none of the sublime manifestations of the Divine attributes and perfections, developed in the matchless scheme of redemption, are either discerned or esteemed by such minds; but the visible world and its pursuits constantly engross the attention.

So essential is this entire cleansing from all sin to perfect union with God, that if any degree of moral impurity remain in the heart of a Christian, in every act of devotion and duty in life, it will affect his spirit toward God; and however regular he may be in the outward forms of devotion, there will be less of the celestial fervor which should always glow on the altar of the heart.

We now proceed more particularly to consider the extent of this purity. It is not only important that we be holy Christians, but that our holiness extend to all the relations in life, and to all the exercises of the heart. It is not only our duty to be pure in our general Christian character, but to be cleansed from all unrighteousness, that we may perfect holiness in the fear of God.

Our love to God must be pure, free from every mixture of unholy selfishness; above every degree of dissimulation. We should love the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, mind, and strength.

This pure affection admits no rival. Neither the seduction of sin nor the fascinations of the world will alienate the affections from the object that is now their supreme delight. To the soul thus elevated by the love of God, wealth has lost its importance; pleasure its attraction; honor its brilliancy; dignity its splendor.

This love admits of no diversion of the different faculties of the mind upon different objects. Under the influence of this divine principle the soul offers all up to God. The understanding is consecrated to the contemplation of His infinite excellencies; the will to acquiesce in His wise dispensations; the affections to adore His matchless goodness; the gifts to extend the glory of His name; and, if needful, the life to advance the honor of His cause.

This love does not admit of any intermission or limitation. It is a living spark from the divine altar, kindled by the breath of the eternal Spirit, and must be kept constantly glowing in the sanctuary of the heart. It gives the soul a spiritual elevation by which it ascends the third heavens, and reclines on the bosom of Him who fills the throne. It embraces the vast family of man, sympathizes with all their woes, and presents in faith and prayer for its salvation, every undying soul to God.

The universality of this purity is no less manifested in that constant tranquillity which it spreads over the mind. Nothing but moral impurity can excite disquietude and distrust under the government of a wise and good God. Angels and the spirits of just men made perfect are infinitely removed from such painful exercises.

Unshaken confidence in the divine government secures to those glorified beings a calmness and repose that nothing can disturb.—Neither would our souls ever have been the seat of anxiety and disquietude had they never been stained by pollution. When, therefore, the soul is cleansed from all impurity, and restored entirely to the image of God, it will enjoy an uninterrupted quiet. The Spirit of Christ is sufficient to curb the fierce passions, and soothe the violent tempers. Those causes of disquietude and anxiety which, as so many raging winds, agitated the mind, are now hushed, and have left the soul to the enjoyment of a sweet calm, under the bright beams of a Saviour's love. What can disturb the repose of the mind that possesses this evangelical confidence in God? In the day of heavy calamity there is an oracle announcing "*All things* shall work for good to them that love God." When temptations are strong and fierce, it says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

The extent of this moral purity will be manifest in the possession of that patience so closely connected with uniform tranquillity of mind. In no way can the mind of Christ be more clearly developed than in the exemplification of this Christian grace. When it is possessed in all its fulness, then is the Christian "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." He is then prepared to glory even in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart.

When this divine purification has been spread throughout the soul, all the family of the Christian graces is perfected; the whole mind is assimilated to God, and all its energies unreservedly consecrated to His service. How can it be otherwise? The Holy Spirit, in the character of our comforter and sanctifier, now dwells continually in the heart, and every root of bitterness is eradicated. The whole soul receives the genial influence of the Sun of righteousness, every barren waste is made fertile, and all the plants of holiness are fresh, vigorous, and productive.

This state of moral purity can be nothing less than what the apostle calls "sanctification of soul, body, and spirit." It is the extinction of every principle of the heart opposed to divine holiness; the complete destruction of sin;—"of sin properly so called."

If by sin we understand those involuntary deviations from that law which was engraven upon the hearts of our first parents in their primitive innocency, then there can be no deliverance from all *sin*. And in view of this law, there cannot be any such thing as sinless purity. But if by sin we mean what our Church terms original or birth sin, "which is the fault or corruption of the nature of every man which is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness," then we are prepared to say that the grace of God totally destroys its existence. What less than this can our text express, "Cleanse ourselves from *all* filthiness of the *flesh* and *spirit*?" This is indeed to be cleansed from *all* sin, for where sin exists it must defile. The first and most prominent object of the mediation instituted by Jehovah in Christ, was to take away sin, to cleanse from *all* sin, and thereby to prepare for the reign of grace, "that where *sin* abounded, there *grace* might much more *abound*." Now, there must be a weakness in the institution, or the object may be accomplished. But there can be no weakness in an institution sustained by omnipotent energy. Every attribute of the divine mind is concerned in the destruction of sin. What can be too hard for that power that moves on the deep of the depraved mind, and says, "Let there be purity;" "Be ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you?" Now the soul is elevated in all the loveliness of spiritual order and harmony, in all the moral excellency of the divine image; pure because God is pure.

There are those who believe in the necessity of this state of moral purity, and who expect to attain it in the order in which vegetation reaches its consummation; consequently they do not expect their spiritual harvest until the hour of death. They consider the attainment of sanctification as a consequence resulting from fidelity to God, rather than an instantaneous operation effected by the Eternal Spirit, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But this view stands directly opposed to those evangelical sentiments, which assure us that from the commencement to the consummation, salvation is of grace. If this great deliverance depend on our works, then is it no longer of faith, but of works; and boasting, or self commendation, is not excluded. This view necessarily removes the blessing from our immediate grasp, while

salvation from sin through Christ is always present; we need not wait to ascend on high, or to go to the deep; behold now is the accepted time for full and entire salvation. Why then must we wait until our earthly course is run before we enter into our spiritual rest? What connection can there be between the corporeal body and the body of sin, by which the latter cannot die unless the former die also? If sin were a natural disease and had its seat in the body, there would be some plausibility in the supposed coincidence; but as its existence is limited to the mind, no reason can be adduced why the body must die before sin can be exterminated. Nor can we conceive how death can affect our moral habit or spiritual character. It may indeed terminate many ills that "flesh is heir to," but to say that it destroys sin and washes out the stains of moral pollution, is not only an outrage on common sense, but a vile insult on the Redeemer, who claims the whole merit of washing us from our sins in His own blood.

2. *Who are those in whom holiness is to be perfected?*

God's regenerate children. Those whom the apostle at the commencement of this epistle calls the "Church of God." The exhortation in the text, being addressed to such, implies that those who are God's holy people in their general and prevailing character, are not entirely so. There is remaining in them some "filthiness of the flesh and spirit." Their holiness is imperfect, not in quality, but in extent.

We have no intention to undervalue the work of regeneration. The state of a justified person is inexpressibly great and glorious. "He is born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He is a child of God, a member of Christ, and an heir of the kingdom of Heaven. The peace of God which passeth all understanding keepeth his heart and mind in Christ Jesus. His very body is a temple of the Holy Ghost; a habitation of God through the Spirit. His heart is purified by faith. He is cleansed from the corruption that is in the world. The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto him. He keepeth the commandments of God, and doeth those things that are pleasing in his sight. And he has power over both inward and outward sin. But he is not freed from all sin. This is evident from the plain testimony of Scripture. The author of our text, in speaking to believers, and describing the state of believers in general, says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." He directly affirms that the flesh, evil nature, opposes the spirit even in believers, so that even in the regenerate there are two principles contrary the one to the other.

Again: When he writes to the believers at Corinth, to those who are in Christ Jesus, he says, "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal?" Now here the apostle speaks unto those who were believers, who were in Christ, whom he styles his brethren, as being still in a measure carnal. He affirms that there was envying, an evil temper

occasioning strife among them, and yet does not give the least intimation that they had lost their faith. Nay, he manifestly declares that they had not lost their faith; had this been the case they would not have been babes in Christ. And here observe, he speaks of being carnal and babes in Christ at one and the same time; plainly showing that every believer is in a degree carnal, while he is only a babe in Christ. Indeed this grand point, that there are two contrary principles in believers, nature and grace, runs through all the epistles of St. Paul; yes, through all the Holy Scriptures.

Almost all the exhortations and directions given in the oracles of God to Christians are founded on this supposition, that wrong tempers and affections exist in those who are, notwithstanding, acknowledged by the inspired writers to be believers. And they are constantly exhorted to fight and conquer these, by the power of the faith that is in them. Can we doubt that there was faith in the angel of the Church at Ephesus, when our Lord said to him, "I know thy works, and that thou hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." But was there no sin in his heart? There must have been, or Christ could not have added, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." This was real sin in his heart, of which he was exhorted to repent. And yet we have no authority to say, that, even then, he had no faith. The angel of the Church at Pergamos is also exhorted to repent. This exhortation implies the existence of sin, though concerning him it is expressly said, that he had not denied the faith. But what can be more clear on this subject than the text? This is addressed to the saints at Corinth. Had not the work of purification commenced in them, they could not have been denominated saints; had they been in a state of apostacy, it would not have been said of them "who are in Christ." It is evident they were Christian believers; but they were not cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, consequently sin had existence in them.

The position that there is sin in believers, is not only sustained by the word of God, but is in perfect accordance with the experience of his children. They continually feel the influence of the carnal mind; a tendency to backsliding; a proneness to depart from God, and cleave to things of earth. They are daily sensible of sin remaining in their hearts, pride, self will, unbelief, love of the world; and of sin cleaving to all they speak or do, even their best actions, and holiest duties. Yet, at the same time, they know that they are of God; they are even enabled to rejoice in the testimony of His spirit, "witnessing with their spirit that they are the children of God," by regeneration and adoption through Christ Jesus, who is now presented for them before the throne of God;—"a lamb as it had been slain," and in virtue of the sacrifice they have boldness of access to the throne of grace. But can Christ be in the same heart where sin is? Undoubtedly he can. Otherwise it never would be saved from sin. Where the malady is, there the physician must be. The seat of sin is the heart, and nothing but the presence of Christ can remove it. Christ, indeed, cannot reign where

sin reigns; neither will He dwell where sin is allowed. But He is present with, and dwells in the heart of every believer who is vigorously opposing sin, although that heart may not as yet be cleansed from all impurity.

The notion, that in the process of purification we have no positive sin to be saved from, but only a maturity of the Christian graces to attain, is not only unscriptural, and contrary to the experience of the saints, but may be attended with very serious consequences. A devout child of God may become conscious of the existence of some sinful temper or affection; and, under the influence of this error, he naturally draws the conclusion that he has been deceived, or that he is a hypocrite. His soul is grieved and wounded, he throws away his confidence, and becomes a prey to the tempter, and is, perhaps, for ever lost. Having cast away his shield, how can he quench the fiery darts of the devil? How shall he overcome the world, seeing this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith? He stands disarmed in the midst of his enemies, open to all their assaults. What wonder, then, if he is utterly overthrown, if they take him captive at their will? This cannot be the doctrine of the gospel, because it would rather hinder than promote the work of God. But as there is a strong disposition manifested to sustain this error, it may not be amiss to notice more particularly the most plausible arguments brought forward in its support.

And first it is said, "Every believer is born of God, is clean, is holy, is sanctified, is pure in heart, has a new heart, is a temple of the Holy Ghost. Now that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, is altogether good. A man cannot be clean, sanctified, holy, and at the same time unsanctified, unholy. He cannot be pure and impure, or have a new and an old heart together." Let us now examine this argument part by part. And first, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, is altogether good. The text we allow, but not the comment. For the text affirms no more than this, that every man who is born of the Spirit, is a spiritual man. He is so as to his general character, and so he may be, and not be altogether spiritual. He may dwell in a spiritual atmosphere, and yet not dwell in the Godhead's brightest rays. The Christians at Corinth were spiritual men, or they never could have been called saints; and yet they were not altogether spiritual. They were still in part carnal; "but they were fallen from grace." St. Paul says, they were babes in Christ. To be in Christ is to have a spiritual connection with him, as the branch is in the vine, as the stone is in the building. "But a man cannot be clean, sanctified, holy, and at the same time unclean, unsanctified, unholy." Indeed he may; so the Corinthians were. Ye are washed, says the apostle, ye are sanctified. By sanctification he means a cleansing from outward sin; and yet, in another sense of the word, they were still unsanctified; they were not washed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; they were not cleansed from envy, evil surmisings, partiality. "But most assuredly they could not have a new and an old heart at the same time." Most certainly they

had, so far as an old heart implies the remains of an unholy nature. For at that very time, their hearts were not entirely renewed. Their carnal mind was nailed to the cross, yet it had not spent its last dying groan; it was a chained captive, but occasionally making a powerful struggle to get free; still it could not gain any advantage while the soul continued watching unto prayer, resting on the altar that sanctifies the gift.

This whole argument, "If he is clean, he is clean; if he is holy, he is holy," is really no better than playing upon words. It is the fallacy of arguing from a particular to a general; or of inferring a general conclusion from particular premises. Propose the argument entire, and it runs thus: "If he is holy in his general character, he is holy altogether." That does not follow. Every babe in Christ is holy, yet not entirely holy; he is saved from sin, yet not altogether saved from sin; sin remains, though it does not reign. How can any person doubt of the remains of sin in ordinary believers, who has examined the length and breadth of God's law, which requires that we love the Lord our God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength? Now every deviation from this law is sin. Is there no want of conformity to this law in the heart of believers in general? No man can doubt this, unless he be a stranger to human nature.

But the supposing sin in a believer is frightful and discouraging. It implies the contending with a power that has the possession of our strength, maintains his usurpation of our hearts, and there prosecutes the war in defiance of our Redeemer. Not so. The supposing sin in us does not imply that it has the possession of our strength; no more than a man crucified has the possession of those who crucify him.—"As little does it imply that sin maintains its usurpation of our hearts." The usurper is dethroned. He remains indeed where he once reigned, but remains under the feet of Him who has conquered all our enemies; becoming weaker and weaker, while the believer goes on from strength to strength, conquering and to conquer. We can come to no other conclusion than that believers, according to the measure of their faith, may be spiritual; yet in a degree carnal. They know they are in Him, and yet find a heart ready to depart from the living God, even an evil heart of unbelief.

From what has been said, we learn the dangerous tendency of the opinion, that we are *wholly* sanctified when we are justified; that our hearts are then cleansed from all sin. This opinion is not an innocent, harmless mistake. It may do *immense* harm. It entirely precludes the possibility of any farther change; for it is manifest, they that are whole do not need a physician, but they that are sick. If we, therefore, think that we are whole already, there is no occasion to seek for any farther healing. On this supposition, it is absurd to expect a farther deliverance from sin, whether gradual or instantaneous. On the contrary, a deep conviction that we are not yet spiritually whole, that our hearts are not yet entirely purified, that there is yet in us the remains of a carnal mind, which in its nature is enmity to God; that a whole body

of sin remains in our hearts, weakened indeed, but not destroyed, shows, beyond all possibility of doubt, the absolute necessity of a farther change. And until believers are fully convinced of the deep corruption of their hearts, they will have but little concern about entire sanctification. They may, possibly, believe that such a thing may be, either at death or some time they know not when, but they have no great uneasiness for want of it, they have no hungering and thirsting to be filled with all the fulness of God. And indeed how can they have until they know themselves better; until divine light reveals the purity and extent of God's law? By looking into this holy mirror, the soul becomes prepared to exclaim with the prophet, "Wo is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips;" and with the distinguished saint of the land of Uz, to resolve to repent in dust and ashes. This leads us to consider,

III. *How this work is to be accomplished.*

And, first, we are to cleanse ourselves. To cleanse or sanctify often denotes a mere separation from a common to a holy use, to set apart or consecrate to God as his special property, and for his service. Our Lord uses the word in the above sense, when he says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." In order to obtain that purity implied in a cleansing from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, we must set ourselves apart for God in all acts of self denial, watchfulness, and mortification of the deeds of the body.

As the Holy Spirit is the efficient agent by which this great work is wrought, we must deny ourselves all those exercises of the mind and heart by which He may be grieved. There is a particular state of mind, a temper and sobriety of soul, without which the spirit of God will not concur in the purification of the heart. It is in our power, through His preventing and assisting grace, to prepare this in ourselves, and, without this preparation, the work cannot be consummated. This preparation consists in preserving a cool and serious disposition of mind, in regulating or calming our affections, and calling in and checking the inordinate pursuits of our passions after the vanities and pleasures of this world. Proper attention to this state of mind is of so much importance that the very reason why men profit so little under the most powerful means, is that they do not look enough within themselves: they do not watch the discords and imperfections of their own spirits, nor attend with care to the directions and remedies which the Holy Spirit is always ready to suggest. Men are generally so much immersed in the hurry of life, in its business, or pleasure, as to leave but little opportunity for that calm reflection, and close examination which is indispensable to the purification of our nature. Nothing is more certain, than that the Holy Spirit will not purify our hearts, unless we carefully attend to this direction.

There are many persons who, in their general deportment, sustain their holy profession, and observe the means of religious improvement with great exactness; but, in the intervals of their devotion, give so much liberty to their thoughts, affections, and discourse, that they seem

to adjourn the great business of salvation to the next hour of devotion. In this way they may go in and out of the means of grace, but will not find spiritual communion with God. The work of holiness will not be increased in the heart. By such a course of indulgence, the Holy Spirit is as really grieved as by outward sins. We should not only watch and pray to be saved from the latter, but constantly preserve that frame of mind, suited to the sublime and glorious manifestation of the holy God.

That we may succeed in this great work, we must uniformly observe the means of grace, and most conscientiously regard every duty; cultivate a tender conscience, a rigid exactness in observing the least deviation from the word of God, either in heart or life. Let the constant cry of the soul be,—

“O that my tender soul may fly,
The first abhorr'd approach of ill.”

Consider that we are living under God's eye; that all things are naked and open before him. Think, and speak, and walk, in view of the awful retributions of eternity. By thus reining up the soul to these spiritual and holy exercises, we shall escape a thousand temptations that otherwise would ensnare our feet; we shall be in a condition deeply to feel the importance of all that divine influence which the Holy Spirit imparts. These means and exercises as regularly tend to God, as the sparks fly upward, or the ball tends to the centre of gravity. They cannot be continued in without producing powerful effects.

In all this cleansing, or setting ourselves apart for Christ, we cannot put away sin, or wash out the stains of impurity; we must, therefore, seek entire sanctification by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. This faith is preceded by a deep sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, by clear and extensive views of a want of conformity to the divine nature and law. Sins of omission appear now more aggravated in the sight of God than did formerly overt acts of rebellion. The soul now sees inward defects without number: defects of every kind, that they have not the love, the fear, the confidence toward God which they ought to have. They have not the love which is due to their neighbor, to every child of man. They have no holy temper or affection in the degree required. They can no more bear the strict justice of God now, than before they believed. This pronounces them to be still worthy of death on all the preceding accounts.

From this state of inward sorrow and sinfulness, the soul has no power to deliver itself. In vain does the subject of justifying grace attempt to expel pride, unbelief, self will, and every other spiritual enemy. The grace given at justification does not extirpate them.—Nor are they ever cast out and destroyed until that faith is exercised by which the soul is entirely sanctified to God. This faith, though not different in its nature; yet it is in its circumstances, from that by which

we are justified. Indeed, this is a distinct exercise, and commences a new era in the history of the child of God. This faith has distinct reference to Christ as our sanctifier, in making an end of sin in all its tempers, affections, and pollutions, and transforming the soul entirely into the image of God. In seeking the blessing of justification and regeneration, the blessing of entire sanctification is hardly in our contemplation; it does not come within the range of our faith. Now, as it is the order of God to bless according to our faith, and only according to our faith, no wonder that those who are real believers in Christ, so long remain destitute of this blessing. Our faith must embrace the glad tidings of this great salvation which God hath prepared for all people. Believe that He, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person, is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him. He is able to save you from all the sin which remains in your hearts, from all the sin that cleaves to all your words and actions. He is able to save you from all omissions, and supply all that is wanting in you. He is not only able to do this, but he has promised to do it. Having these promises, let your faith have particular respect unto them while you plead the atoning merit of the great Mediator, and you cannot be disappointed. Believe that you have *now* come to the mount of glorious promise which the enraptured prophet saw, when he exclaimed, "*Then* will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart, and I will give you a heart of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." This is the open door to that fountain of divine purity where all the stains of sin may be washed out, where you may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, depth and height, where you may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God. O, let us come even unto him who is able and willing to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. How glorious, how abundant the provision to extinguish all the fires of sin! In Christ there is merit enough to remove all its guilt; there is power enough to cast out and destroy its very being, and enable the soul to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Christ, to the believer in this great salvation, is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Although this work is progressive in believers, it is no less certain than it is instantaneous. There is a time when the soul is entirely sanctified. The fountains of human life may be said gradually to flow out, and, as they flow, the soul approximates nearer and nearer to its dissolution from the body. But there is a definite moment when this dissolution takes place. And there is a definite moment when the body of sin expires; when the believer may say with the apostle, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" when he is indeed dead to sin; when all his nature is sanctified to God. This must be the case, be-

cause this blessing is received by faith. Faith is a definite exercise in view of a definite blessing. The very expectation of being sanctified at some future period precludes the possibility of that faith which is indispensable to the immediate reception of the blessing; for this implies unbelief in regard to being now entirely saved. The mind cannot act in relation to two periods at the same time, any more than in relation to two objects. What, therefore, we are looking for at some future period, we shall not be able to obtain now. Were this work necessarily progressive, so as to prevent our immediate reception of the blessing, then this faith, of which we speak, would be mere presumption, and we should be obliged to bow down to all the unholy affections and tempers peculiar to our state. And the most that we could pray for, in faith, would be, that we might live to witness our spiritual jubilee. How would this paralyze our spiritual energies, and prevent the capabilities of our moral natures from being called out in vigorous action in the glorious work of loving and serving God! Can this result accord with the benevolent and sublime objects of the gospel? Impossible.

If we give up the present as the day of this great salvation, who can say when it shall be? *Death* may be fixed upon as the period for the consummation of that holiness without which no man shall see God. But what *assurance* have we of such an effect? We have none, unless it can be made to appear that death has some mysterious influence over the mind, by which it purifies from sin. Death is a part of the penalty of the violated law. This agency would make it a part of our redemption. Absurd in the extreme! Some redeeming institution after death may be looked forward to for the salvation of those who are not made holy in this life; such an expectation must involve the same absurdity, inasmuch as all, who die unholy, fall under the curse of the law which knows no mercy. Their sin is the cause of their separation from God; and the cause cannot be destroyed by the effect. We may as well, however, adopt one hypothesis as another. The moment we leave the plain testimony of scripture, all is conjecture and uncertainty. If the present time is not the time for this great salvation, we can have no assurance that it will ever be accomplished.

That the present is the time for this great work to be wrought, must be obvious from the *object and end of our sanctification*. It is not merely to prepare us for heaven, that holiness is necessary; but to enable us to show forth the spirit of Christ in all holy living, perfecting holiness in the fear of God while here on earth.

Christians are active and useful in the service of God in proportion as they are holy, and only in that proportion. It is impossible to calculate what a momentum would be given to the work of God, were all his people holy, harmless and undefiled. With the most ardent desire and powerful efforts should we be found laboring for the accomplishment of this object.

How many professed Christians are indulging in that supineness and sloth which would lead one to suppose that their highest expectations

were to become sufficiently holy to escape future perdition. How mean, how unworthy the high relation of a child of God are such views and feelings! It should be our inquiry, How much of the divine mind can I attain? How deep may I sink in the Godhead's sea? How high may I rise in the region of sanctifying love? How may I best answer the end of my being? How may I bring most honor to that Saviour who loved me, and gave himself for me? O, my brethren, were we all absorbed in these important inquiries, all consecrated to the cross of Christ, how soon would the church become a glorious galaxy that would remove all the darkness of our moral world. Her atmosphere would distil in fertilizing dews on every barren waste.— Her pools would spring up in the dry land. Her glory would fill all the earth. All other means, however well directed, cannot accomplish so much for our degraded and wretched world, as a spiritual, holy, sanctified church.

Here, then, we must hold. This is Heaven's high command, "Be ye holy." This holiness must fill the earth. Then shall our world be restored to order, harmony, and love. Without this there will be envyings, bickerings, wrath and strife, war and commotion. Holiness is the grand conservative of all that is excellent and glorious; all that is dear to man, and honorable to God; all that can pass unwrecked amidst the wastes of time, and the dissolution of worlds. Holiness is essential to personal and universal happiness. The happiness of heaven could not survive the loss of its holiness. This is the zone that binds the glorified myriads in love and harmony. This is the grand power of heavenly attraction and motion, which fixes them for ever in delightful admiration of the glorious God, and which sacredly impels them forward with the utmost promptitude, energy, and gladness, in the sublime worship and services of immortality. But should the unholy principles of our natures ever once be countenanced, then, in one moment the sun of divine felicity would be blotted out; the sea of heavenly bliss would roll back; celestial order would be succeeded by a storm of anarchy and confusion which would shake the throne of God itself.

This subject particularly addresses believers in Jesus Christ. What a want is there, my brethren, of that deep and uniform piety which should distinguish the church of God! I am not prepared to say that there is a less degree of it in the church now than formerly. No; so far as my observation has extended, I have never known more spirituality, more devotion to Christ, than at the present time. But yet there is much spiritual land to be possessed, there are heights and depths in holiness, that remain to be experienced; pious and benevolent labors that remain to be accomplished. What a call have we then to gird on the heavenly armor, to lay aside every weight, and to come forth as valiant soldiers in this holy warfare! We see how much our entire holiness is connected with our own individual happiness, and how much it is connected with the enlargement of the church, the salvation of the world.

It may also address the ministers of Christ. We, my brethren, are, in the providence of God; appointed to stand out on the walls of Zion. We must give an impulse to all the important enterprises of the church. We must put in motion that pure, that heavenly feeling without which they will ever languish. Eminence in personal piety will always invest a ministry with attractions which nothing else can impart. It is not enough that a minister be holy, he should be eminently holy; he should be as much distinguished by his purity, as by his calling. If, my dear brethren, we have been counted faithful, being put into the ministry, it is of immense importance that we should be examples to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity. We need to live much on the margin of the invisible world! Like Enoch to walk with God; like Abraham to walk by faith, renouncing all confidence in human wisdom; like Paul, though not miraculously, yet spiritually, to be caught up to the third heavens. If we expect our ministry to make a deep impression on the hearts of those who hear us, we must have much communion with God. It is by dwelling in God, and God dwelling in us, that we receive the divine anointing, without which the sacred robe cannot send out a savory perfume; without this every other attainment is lost, so far as the spiritual character of the church is concerned. As ministers we must lead in this work, by preaching the doctrine of entire purification, by walking in all purity of mind and heart before God and the world. If we have in any measure neglected this business, let us now put on sackcloth, and bow down before God, and repent in dust and ashes. How many souls may have been hindered in their way to heaven for want of our aid; and it may be some have been turned out of the way. What a thought! may it move our souls, and inspire in our hearts a resolution to consecrate ourselves anew to Christ and our work! O the inconceivable importance of a zealous, pious, sanctified ministry, whose light shall never wane, whose love shall never grow cold, who shall give Jehovah no "rest," until Jerusalem be a praise in all the earth! Amen.

A LETTER

FROM A LADY OF STOUGHTON, TO THE CHURCH IN NORTH BRIDGE-WATER, UNDER THE PASTORAL CARE OF REV. DANIEL HUNTINGTON: OF WHICH CHURCH SHE IS A MEMBER. 1830.

MY BELOVED BRETHREN AND SISTERS,—Love to Christ, to your souls, and to all my fellow-creatures, has constrained me to request you to hear what the Lord has done for my soul. Last winter, I began to feel more weary of sin than I had ever before done. I spent a considerable part of my nights in anguish, at the thought that I should sin against God the next day. It seemed very mysterious to me, that, when

God had such an abhorrence of sin,—when he had given his Son to die for the salvation of sinners,—that he had provided no way whereby his children might be freed from sin in this life. It seemed almost to reflect on his character. The language of my heart was, “O that I knew where I might find him! I would come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.” I thought that if I could get near to God, I should plead with so much importunity that he would keep me from all sin, that I should obtain a promise that he would grant my request. While in this state of mind, my sister mentioned to me, that a girl who lived with her had the life of Rev. William Bramwell, a clergyman of the Methodist order, who appeared to have been a man of the deepest piety. I obtained the book;—found that he professed to be wholly sanctified; and the great degree of piety he evinced in all his conduct astonished me. I could not doubt that he possessed a far greater degree of piety than any person whose life I had ever read. But still I could not believe that he was entirely free from sin; though I found nothing in his life which did not correspond with his profession. Some who read this book doubted the truth of it;—but to *me* it seemed to carry along with it an evidence of its truth. While reading this book, and for a while afterwards, I frequently retired to my closet, and earnestly prayed that God would give me such feelings as Mr. Bramwell possessed. But it seemed as if God did not regard my prayers. I at length became discouraged. I concluded that God bestowed such grace on Mr. Bramwell to prepare him for the great work in which he was engaged; but that he was not willing to give *me* such a measure of his Spirit. But still I was not satisfied, and felt as if I never should be until I received a fulness of God’s love.

Not long after this, I borrowed an account of the experience of Hester Ann Rogers, who also professed entire sanctification. She was the daughter of a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church, had been blessed with superior education, and her intellectual powers were of the highest order. Her mother had been careful to instil into her mind strong prejudices against the Methodists. Adding to all this her deep piety, (for in this respect she did not seem behind Mr. Bramwell,) I thought it rather mysterious that she should have been so deluded as to think herself thoroughly cleansed from all iniquity, if she were not. I thought it high time for me to inquire into the subject; and that if God had any such blessing to bestow on his children, I would if possible obtain it. I searched the scriptures, with earnest prayer that God would enable me rightly to understand them; and thought I could find much more in favor of this doctrine, than I could find which seemed to be against it. I found in Mrs. Rogers’s life, some letters addressed to a cousin of hers, a young clergyman. She addressed him as being, like myself, in a doubting frame of mind. He doubted whether God ever did cleanse any of his children from all sin in this life, but seemed anxious for light on the subject. In subsequent letters to her correspondents, Mrs. Rogers mentioned that this cousin of hers had received

the blessing of entire sanctification, and preached that doctrine. She also spoke of the success which attended his labors.

After reading this, my faith in the doctrine of Christian perfection was strengthened. I resolved to approach the Mercy-seat, and ask God to cleanse and keep me from all sin. I also resolved, that I would never give over seeking this blessing until I obtained it. I went into my closet, feeling my weakness and unworthiness as I never did before, and poured out my soul to God, in "groanings that cannot be uttered." After I returned from my closet, I continued three hours in mental prayer, when I was made to rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." I then had an evidence that I was cleansed from all sin. I felt as though I had been liberated from a gloomy prison, where I had been bound with the galling chains of sin, and was prepared to join the spirits before the throne, in praising God!

I continued in this frame of mind during the remainder of that day, and the following morning awoke happy. My first thought was, that, with all my heart, "I was coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." But soon my faith began to waver;—that God would keep me from *all* sin seemed more than I could believe. I thought I would let go my hold on the doctrine of Christian perfection, and strive to live as near to God as I possibly could. My soul began to fill with darkness. I saw that I was sinking in the sea of unbelief,—and cried, "Lord save, or I perish!" The loss of recent joys filled me with anguish inexpressible! I quickly thought of Him, "who being in an agony prayed the more earnestly," and resolved to follow his example.

After spending the most of that day in fervent prayer, "I was filled with a peace in God which passeth all understanding." I then saw, clearly as in the light of noonday, that there was but *one* way for me to live without committing any sin; and that was, to ask God to keep me from all sin, fully believing that he would grant my request. I saw also as clearly, that I must profess my belief in this doctrine, and tell what the Lord had done for my soul;—that if I did not do this, I should not "do unto others as I would that they should do unto me." I felt the whole weight of those words, "Wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Not that I felt it my duty to preach publicly, but to embrace every proper opportunity of speaking to Christians on the subject of Christian perfection. I expected that by so doing I should incur the displeasure and contempt of the most of my acquaintances. But under this consideration, so far from being discouraged, my soul was joyful in the Lord. I felt that I could desire no higher honor from my Saviour, than suffering for his sake.

In this frame of mind I remained several weeks, filled with the love of God, and without doubting my freedom from sin, with a few exceptions—when I was afraid that my motives in performing some actions had not been altogether pure. The Lord cleared up these doubts by shedding a divine light on the motives of my past actions, and convincing me that they were pure. Indulging myself in these doubts seemed

to displease God, and the flame of love in my heart seemed in a measure quenched. But the moment I dismissed them, it was rekindled.

At the expiration of this time, I wrote a letter to our Pastor, to acquaint him with the Lord's dealings with my soul. While writing this letter, I felt very sensible that Satan was in a great rage. I felt as sensible of his rage, as ever I did of the anger of my fellow-creatures when I have seen them strongly evince it by their words and actions. The evening after I had written, I had a little doubting in my mind, as to my being entirely free from sin. I could see no cause for these doubts, yet I had not so clear a witness of the Spirit that I was cleansed from all sin as I desired. The following was the language of my heart to God: "Am I indeed free from sin? Lord show me;—give me clearer light." I felt that I must be *sure* of this, before I professed it. The following text was strongly impressed on my mind: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light." Bodily disease and exhaustion so affected my mind that evening, that I do not think God could have given me clearer light without an extraordinary exertion of his power. I besought the Lord, that if I was wholly sanctified, and it was his will that I should give the letter I had written to Mr. Huntington, that, as a token of this, he would permit me to go to His house the next day, and there "make all his goodness to pass before me." I went,—and while on my way to church repeated the same request. A few moments after I was seated, suddenly, it seemed as if the whole house was filled with God! Every person I beheld, and also the voices of the singers, seemed to show forth his glory. For a while, it appears to me, that for the first time in all my life, I ceased to think! I do not think I could have been happier in heaven, with the same capacity for enjoyment. And I had no idea, until then, that I was capable of such enjoyment. It was but for a short time that I was under the influence of such overwhelming power; but I remained happy through the day. "The word of God was sweeter than honey to my taste." My desire that all the members of this church might feel as I did, was inexpressible. The next morning I gave the letter to Mr. Huntington, with a full assurance that I was doing an indispensable duty.

Since that time, I have never doubted the willingness of God to sanctify wholly all those who seek this blessing in faith,—and to give this faith to all who seek it with their whole hearts. I do not mean to say, that I think any of the fallen race can be perfect, in the same sense that Adam was when in Paradise. For in consequence of various natural infirmities of mind, I believe that we shall always be liable to do things which we ought not to do, and to leave undone things which we ought to do. But in one sense, I believe it our duty, and privilege, to be as free from sin as Adam before the fall;—that is, to love God with all our hearts; to be actuated by pure motives in all our conduct; "that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God;" "to have every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." I cannot now find a single word in the Bible which seems contrary to this doctrine; and I am sensible that I never

should have done, had not the eyes of my understanding been blinded by sin. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

I find many texts which clearly prove this doctrine. I will mention a few of them.

Matt. vi. 10. Here, Christ teaches his disciples to pray that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven. How could the will of God be done on earth as in heaven, unless some were free from sin,—loved God with all their hearts? And would Christ teach his disciples to ask for any thing which they could not obtain? "God has never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." "Ask and ye shall receive."

"Jesus saw Nathanael coming unto him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" John i. 47. Nathanael must have been free from sin; for where there is *any* sin, there must be *some* guile. Some suppose that Christ meant only that Nathanael was willing to confess that he was a sinner. But according to this explanation, we might find many unconverted sinners, and some, even of the most vicious and abandoned characters, very free from guile.

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thess. v. 23. This proves that St. Paul was a believer in this doctrine.

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus ii. 14. From *all* iniquity, not from a *part* of our iniquity.

"Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. v. 19. Would Christ have said this, if he had thought it impossible for any to obey all his commandments? It is evident, by the last clause, that Christ supposed some *would* keep all his commandments.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Matt. v. 48. What stronger proof could we have, that perfection is attainable, than the fact that God has required this of us? God would not require more of us than we were able by his grace to perform.

One person to whom I professed my belief in the doctrine of perfection, said to me, "What are you going to do with that text,—'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves?'" That text I think should be explained in this way: "If we say that we are not naturally sinful,—that we have no need of the blood of Christ, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, to cleanse and keep us from sin, we deceive ourselves." It is already explained in this way, by the two following verses. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and the truth is not in us."

Rev. Mr. Cogswell, in his Assistant to Family Religion, says, "It is contrary to scripture to suppose, that any ever have, or ever will, arrive at sinless perfection in this life." And to prove the truth of this asser

tion, quotes the three following texts of scripture. Job ix. 20; Eccl. vii. 20; Rom. vii. 24.

Job ix. 20. "If I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, this also shall prove me perverse." I cannot see how this proves that perfection is not attainable in this life. It is very evident by Job's conversation, that he had many wrong feelings at the time; and if it proves any thing, it proves that he was not a hypocrite. If David, when planning the death of Uriah, and Peter, when denying his Lord, had confessed that they were doing things which they ought not to do, would this have proved that all Christians were always doing things which they ought not to do?

Eccl. vii. 20. "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." This doubtless means, either that there are none naturally holy, or that there are none in that state of perfection in which man was created. If this text proves that there are none wholly sanctified, then why does not the third verse of the fourteenth Psalm equally prove that there are no Christians? For there we are told, that "there is none that doeth good." Those that possess the spirit of Christ, in any measure, must do *some* good.

Rom. vii. 24. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Some are of the opinion that St. Paul was not describing his present feelings when he said this; but that he was personating an individual under conviction of sin; and I think they have some ground for such an opinion. But admitting that he was describing his feelings after his conversion, it would not prove that he never was wholly sanctified, or that others cannot obtain that blessing. St. Paul had doubtless been living without sin when he said to the Philippians, "Ye have us for an ensample." If, as Dr. Scott says of him, when explaining Rom. vii., "He was frequently betrayed into such tempers, words and actions, as he did not approve or allow in his renewed judgment and affections"—if he "indignantly and reluctantly served a master he abhorred," and was obliged to live under a sort of necessity of being a sinner, he would not have wished others to follow his example. Such a wish would have been contrary to the whole tenor of his preaching. "Shall we continue in sin," he says, "that grace may abound? God forbid." Rom. vi. 1. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." xii. 1. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. vi. 20. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. v. 1. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Verse 16. "Wherefore, take unto yourselves the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Eph. vi. 13. "And this I pray, that ye may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ." Phil. i. 9, 10. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Col.

iii. 17. "Keep thyself pure." 1 Tim. v. 2. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Some, to prove that St. Paul was not wholly sanctified, quote Phil. iii. 12. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Might not Christ have said the same? for we read that he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man; and also, that he was made perfect through suffering. In the same chapter the apostle says, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

Dr. Scott says, "Perfect holiness should be the object of the unremitting prayers and endeavors of all Christians;" and I believe that all Christians would agree with him in this. And now I ask, Can you not see the inconsistency of saying that we ought to seek for a thing which we cannot obtain? Can a person do this? Is there any such thing as seeking in faith for that which we are sure we shall never obtain? Is it not contrary to reason,—does it not derogate from the character of God, to suppose, that notwithstanding all the displeasure he has expressed on account of sin, all the commands he has given us to be holy, and all the gracious promises he has held out to those who obey him, he would have any thing in his word, which was calculated to discourage us from seeking a full redemption? And if there are any texts of scripture which prove that no person ever did, or ever will, live without sinning, they must have that tendency: for no person ever *did*, or ever will, seek for that which they know they shall not obtain. They may say, "Thy will be done on earth, even as it is in heaven;" but what are words, unless they express the sentiments of the heart?

The theory of those who deny the doctrine of Christian perfection, amounts to this. God is a being of infinite holiness, goodness, truth and mercy. He has given his only begotten Son to die for our salvation, when we had forfeited his favor by sinning against him:—and yet he has required of us more than he will enable us to perform. God has expressed great abhorrence of sin—pronounced the most terrible threatenings against it; has expressed great pleasure in the obedience of his creatures—offered the most gracious rewards for it; but notwithstanding all this, there are passages in his word which discourage any from seeking perfect holiness. God has said that it is his will that we should be sanctified; that he is more ready to give us his Holy Spirit than we are to ask it; has told us to open our mouths wide and he will fill them; to pray that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; and yet, we may pray for these things our whole life time, and he will never fully grant our request.

I would ask those who say that none can live without sinning, How *much* sin we are under the necessity of committing? Must we break the commands of God, and grieve the Holy Spirit, five, ten, or twenty times in the course of a day? Or must we be continually doing this?

If any of you are saying in your hearts, as one person to whom I

professed my belief in this doctrine said to me, "Then you are wiser than President Edwards and Dr. Scott were," (as though I could not be right because my views differed from theirs,) let me remind you of the following passages of scripture: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." 1 Cor. iii. 19. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, 29. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matt. xi. 25, 26. None, except those who have had similar experience, can imagine what my feelings are, when I hear professed Christians argue against this doctrine. I feel that they are pleading for the crucifiers of Christ. All who exert their influence against the belief of this doctrine, are breaking not one of the least, but one of the greatest of God's commandments, and teaching men so: for they do not love God with all their hearts, and assert that none can do this—or that none ever did, or ever will, which amounts to the same.

This doctrine, blessed be God, will soon be universally believed—yea, at that day when there shall be "upon the bells of the horses, holiness unto the Lord: and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar: and every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts: and there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." God will not do such great things for his children until they believe. It would be inconsistent with divine economy that they should be holy, until they believe that God is able and willing to make them so. "Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you." Matt. ix. 28, 29. "And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way: as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." Matt. viii. 13. "And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." xliii. 58. "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." xv. 28. "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Mark v. 34. "While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain, which said, Thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." 35, 36. "When he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." Luke v. 20. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." James v. 15. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed: let not that man think he shall receive

any thing of the Lord." James i. 5, 6, 7. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark xi. 24. "All things are possible to him that believeth." Mark i. 23.

I feel as though words were insufficient to give you an adequate idea of the blessedness of being in a state of entire sanctification. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the unsanctified heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for those who love him" with all their heart. But "as a reason for the hope that is in me," I will mention some of my feelings. All the good things of this life, which God is pleased to give me, I receive with gratitude; and have not the least desire for any thing he is pleased to withhold. In view of all the evils to which I am exposed, I can say, "Thy will be done." When injured, I can say, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." I always feel that I should rejoice to leave the world at any moment when the Lord has nothing more for me to do,—and should rejoice to live until the end of time, if I might be useful to my fellow-creatures. I feel not only willing, but greatly desirous, to do to others as I should wish them to do to me, if I were in their condition, and they in mine. The idea of committing one sin, seems dreadful beyond expression. I often think that if I did not believe that God was willing to keep me from all sin, I should be of all creatures the most miserable. But if I did not believe this, I should not have such dread of sin; for I should not be free from sin.

I used to think it strange, that when I believed the Bible, I was not more affected when I heard its truths preached. Now, when at church, I have an overwhelming sense of spiritual things,—of the goodness and glory of God,—the evil of sin,—the worth of souls, and the preciousness of Christ. I should not once have thought it possible for any person to live with as clear a view of eternal things as I have. But my mind is stayed on God: "His everlasting arm is underneath me." Were it not for this, I should sink. I feel as much as if "old things had passed away, and all things had become new," as I did at the time of my conversion;—and it is my opinion, and also the opinion of those who have heard me relate my experience at that time, that my views of divine things were then uncommonly clear. The face of nature wears a different aspect; and even the sound of the church bell seems changed. When free from pain and distress of body (which has considerable effect on my mind), I feel almost as though I had regained Paradise. I do not feel that there is the least difficulty in living without sin. I find it very easy "to do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." Abstract from the grace of God, I could not keep myself from one sin; and there is no more difficulty in asking God to keep me from all sin, than from one sin; and God is as willing, and even more willing to cleanse me from all unrighteousness, than that I should indulge in any sin. I see now, that it was nothing but unbelief that ever made Christian perfection seem so difficult of attainment. There has not been one moment since I received the blessing of entire

sanctification, that I have felt as if a thousand worlds would tempt me to part with one atom of the grace which God has given me.

And now, my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, "what more can I say to persuade you to seek this blessed salvation from all sin?" Shall I remind you of the goodness of that Being whom you are continually offending if you are not free from sin!—Of the worth of those precious immortal souls, whose salvation you would do much more to obtain if you were wholly sanctified, than you now do!—Of that abundant entrance into the eternal world, which will be administered to all those who devote themselves entirely to the service of God in this life!—Of that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which God will reserve for all such! Can you do too much for Him who labored and suffered so much for you?—for Him who created you, and has preserved your lives, and given you all things which you have enjoyed until the present time? Will not some of you,—but O! I cannot choose,—will you not all join me in coming up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty," with your whole hearts? Do not think, my dear brethren and sisters, that I underrate your piety. I thank God for what he has done for you; and I must say, that the conversation of some of the members of this church, with whom I have of late had the pleasure of meeting, has been to me "as cold water to a thirsty soul." "But this also I wish, even your perfection."

Yours in Christ,

MYRA LITTLEFIELD.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.—TESTIMONY.

DEAR BROTHER,—I humbly desire to magnify the grace of God, by publicly testifying what grace has done for me. Truly it is the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. I have been led by a way that I knew not. Five years ago I was convicted of my state as a sinner, needing a Saviour. I greatly desired to become a Christian; but I did not receive the Saviour by faith, as mine, to wash me in his blood. I only hoped in his mercy. My friends urged me to join the church. In much fear I went before the session, and was received. I was then told to go to work and convert sinners. This I did, but it was all labor. I had no love constraining me to seek their salvation. How, then, could I speak of love to others, while I was myself under a legal dispensation, and in bondage, serving God with a slavish fear?

Last winter my Saviour was pleased to send his Spirit to convince me of sin, to show me my state as a sinner in his sight, exposed to wrath. I gave up my hope and came to Christ anew. I could be satisfied with nothing short of complete deliverance from sin; and I

was led to receive Him as a full Saviour—not only to pardon my past sins, but to cleanse my soul, to deliver me from the *dominion* of sin, and to fill my heart with perfect love. Glory be unto *his name*, He did deliver me from all my iniquities, and filled my soul with peace. O how sweet was the name of Father. Christ became my Prophet, my Priest, and my King; my Prophet to teach, my Priest to atone, and my King to rule in my heart; bowing my will in sweet subjection, so that the will of my heavenly Father was mine. My heart was filled with longing desire, that all the children of God may know this great salvation. I was grieved that the ministers of Christ should so limit his power. O how my soul longed to hear Christ preached as a full Saviour, who delivers from all sin.

I can now rejoice in the prospect of death; for why should we fear to go to Him whom our souls love—who is to us “the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely?” I can say, with Paul, that “to live is Christ, but to die is gain.” As my body is sustained by daily food, so is my spirit sustained by Christ. He is my life; I do, indeed, eat his flesh and drink his blood, day by day; I live by him. O what a glorious life—a life of faith—a hidden life, which the world knows nothing of. I adore the goodness of God, in bringing my soul into this glorious rest. The rest of Christ is glorious; a rest from our own works, that Christ may work in us to do his perfect will. It is not being engaged in the service of God a part of the time, and the other part serving ourselves; but it is our life to do his will. O what a delightful prospect of growing up into Christ, our living Head in all things. Before, it was sinning and repenting, always falling; but now, glory be unto God, it is growing in grace and in the knowledge of my precious Saviour. It is receiving of his fulness. It is having my conversation in heaven. It is having, constantly, an earnest of my inheritance. Before, I was afraid to speak of Christ to sinners; for I did not know him myself; but now I feel a joy in recommending him to all. The arms of love that compass me, would all mankind embrace.

Many of my friends think that I am in an error. All praise be unto Jesus. He is my strength. I know that it is all of grace, purchased by the sufferings and death of my risen Lord. Because he lives, I shall live also. I know that the moment I trust in self, then I fall. He is my all. O that all his people might know him as he is! How sweet is his promise, that with himself he will freely give us all things. What love! what condescending love! to bestow on us such rich blessings. O that all his children would taste and see that the Lord is good.—*Oberlin Evangelist.*

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

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For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

MARKS OR CHARACTERISTICS OF PERFECT LOVE.

If the doctrine of Holiness or Christian perfection is true, then it will follow, that it is our duty and privilege, even in the present life, to realize in our own souls the fulfilment of that great command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." In other words, we must possess what may properly be called perfect love. Accordingly it becomes a very important and interesting inquiry, When can our love properly be said to be perfect? It will be our object in the remarks which follow, to endeavor to answer this inquiry.

In the first place, perfect love, (that is to say, such love as our Saviour requires us to exercise,) implies the removal or extinction of all SELFISHNESS. So long as there is selfishness in the heart, even in the least degree, there cannot be that perfect love, which Christ requires. But in making this statement, we ought perhaps to keep in mind the distinction, which mental philosophers very properly make, between SELF-LOVE and SELFISHNESS. Self-love is the name for that implanted desire of happiness, which is natural to the human mind; and which, in its legitimate exercise, can never fail to be approved by the great Being who implanted it, selfishness, considered as a state of the mind, is the undue, excessive, or inordinate exercise of the principle of SELF-LOVE; an exercise which is inconsistent with the claims of our fellow men upon us, and particularly the claims of our heavenly Father. Selfishness, therefore, must be removed from the heart before there can be perfect love.

In the second place, there must be not only a removal or extinction of that which is opposite to love; but also the affirmative or positive existence of love itself in the soul. But the question arises here, What is love? It may perhaps be difficult to define this state of mind with much exactness; but we find on a careful examination of it, that it is susceptible of being resolved into two elements, FIRST, a complacency or pleasure in the mere contemplation of the object which is loved, and SECOND, a desire of good to that object. We are not only pleased with the object, which is one thing; but we desire also, which is of still greater moment, to co-operate with it in its own personal plans of action and happiness.

Guide to Christian Perfection.

We now proceed to inquire, When this love may be regarded as *perfect*; in other words, When shall we know, or at least have reasonable grounds to believe, that we fulfill in our own hearts that great and excellent command, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength?—Love to a human object, it will be remembered, embraces two things; *FIRST*, a pleasure or complacency in the object, and *SECOND*, a desire to do good to that object. When speaking of God, who sustains to us a relation higher and different from that sustained by human beings, we may with propriety alter the form of expression slightly, although with essentially the same idea at the bottom, and say that love to God embraces two things; *FIRST*, a pleasure or complacency in his character, and *SECOND*, a desire to promote his glory. Accordingly the first mark of perfect love to God is an entire approbation of and delight in his character in all respects. In other words, approving and complacent emotions, without the least intermixture of doubt and dissatisfaction, arise in view of his power and justice, as well as of his goodness and mercy, so that we delight truly and continually in his whole character, and in all the exhibitions of his character, as they are actually made known to us in the Holy Scriptures or in any other way. A second mark of perfect love is, the existence of a desire to promote his glory, which is the other higher and *more* decisive characteristic of this complex mental state, in such a *degree*, that we are not conscious of having any desire or will at variance with the will of God. In other words, it is our sincere and constant desire to do and to suffer in all things the will of God. When such is the case, when there is an entire and cordial acquiescence of our own will in the will of God both to do and to suffer, we have the second mark, and probably we may add the most important and satisfactory one, that our love is perfect. The nature of the human mind is such, that we never can have an entire and cordial acquiescence in the will of God in all things, without an antecedent approval of and complacency in his character and administration.—Accordingly the second mark, viz., a will entirely accordant with and lost in the will of God, is of itself sufficient. And by this, as I suppose, we may know, whether love is or is not perfect.

We may, perhaps, illustrate this view of the subject, by what we sometimes notice in the various forms and degrees of filial love. We will take, in the first place, the case of a child, who is sincerely attached to his father, but who, as we sometimes express it, exhibits “a will of his own.” This child, undoubtedly, loves his father very much; but at the same time he does not always do, with entire pleasure and readiness, what his father wishes him to do. He sometimes hesitates, exhibits a clouded brow, or utters an impatient expression, when certain things are required of him. He has certain little objects of his own which he is very much attached to; and if his father’s plans happen to cross and oppose them, he exhibits, in a greater or less degree, a disposition to set up for himself and to rebel. And when he outwardly obeys, it is found that he does it reluctantly, and not with a will harmonizing and blending with the paternal will. Now we say very truly, that this child loves his father—perhaps he loves him very much—and yet it is clear he does not love him perfectly. But when we see a child who is happy only when he sees his father happy; whose delight it is to anticipate the father’s wishes; whose will, by a sort of instinctive tendency, is invariably and powerfully united and blended with the paternal will, so that the least opposition between the two wills is a source of

the greatest grief to him, we at once feel, and cannot help feeling, that the love of such a child may properly be called perfect.

What other idea of perfection of love can we have than this? His heart is made one with another heart, and what could we ask for more? This, then, is the true mark of perfection in Christian love, viz., an entire coincidence of our own wills with the will of God; a full and hearty substitution of the divine mind in the place of our own minds; the rejection of the natural principle of life and the adoption of the heavenly principle of life; the expulsion of self from the heart and the enthronement of God there as its everlasting sovereign. This view, which is practically a very important one, seems to be confirmed by what the Saviour says of himself in a number of passages. John vi. 38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." John iv. 34, "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Heb. x. 9, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." The same idea, viz., that perfection of Christian love exists, and exists only in connection with a will united to and perfectly coincident with the will of God, is conveyed in that interesting passage, Mark iii. 34, 35, "And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever *shall do the will of God*, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." Matt. vii. 21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, *but he that doeth the will of my Father* which is in heaven."

A number of inferences follow from these views.

FIRST,—A person who has perfect love will love his Bible above all other books. It will be dear to his heart, an inexpressible treasure. And the reason is obvious. It is because in the Bible he learns the will of God, while he delights, more than in any thing else, to do and to suffer.

SECOND,—Perfect love will exhibit a trait of permanency and perseverance under the most trying circumstances. Our fears and hopes vary; our joys and sorrows vary; but we may reasonably expect that perfect love will continue the same. There is no reason why it should change, since the object at which it aims is the same with the immutable will of God. Accordingly, when in the providence of God we are afflicted, our joys will be less, but there will be no diminution of love. Joy flourishes in the sunshine, but love grows and flourishes in the storm also. God may hide his face from us, but hearts of love still look in that direction where his face is. The Saviour on a certain occasion was greatly afflicted. His language was, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." His joy was taken from him, but his love remained. He could still say, while he prayed that the cup might, if possible, pass from him, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

THIRD,—We are not at liberty to give up our hope of exercising an acceptable love to God, because we are tempted, tried, afflicted, or called in any way whatever to suffering, so long as we can truly say with our blessed Saviour, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." So long as we can say this, "Our life is hid with Christ in God," we are safe in him; and in our troubles, although we may not have raptures, we shall have peace, abiding peace, such as the world knows not of. And when the day of our visitation is passed, when the light of the divine countenance shines through the clouds which he had pleased to throw around us, and we hear the saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant," which we shall sometimes hear even in the present life, that peace will swell up into a full and solid strain of joy.

FOURTH,—We shall love the brethren with peculiar strength. Perfect love is the image of Christ in the soul; and wherever we see that image, in whatever denomination of Christians, our hearts will recognize the divine relationship, and rejoice in it. Without this strong love to those who bear the divine image, we may be sure that our love is not perfect. It is God's great work, and highest delight, to create this image in the hearts of men; and if our will is swallowed up in his will, we shall rejoice in it in some degree as he does, and shall know the delightful meaning of those numerous passages of scripture which speak of the love of Christians to each other.

T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

BROTHER MERRITT,—Being deeply impressed that in order to be a Christian in the full meaning of the term, one must be a student, a constant student, I have, with all decision, made it my one employ, to live *understandingly*; and would be happy in contributing something to the interest of the "Guide," with my favorite signature. At the age of twelve years, my attention was attracted from the ordinary lessons of the world to that given by our great Teacher. At that period I learned the present effect of repentance, and trust in Jesus for the pardon of all the sin and folly of a childish life. From this I proceeded onward to further knowledge, (not however being a close student,) sometimes seeing clearly—more frequently as through a mist, while attempting to know the meaning of this or that Christian grace. For the six years subsequent to the time mentioned, I realized gradual advancement in the justified way; yet deeply oppressed at times, while thoughts of dissatisfaction and discouragement arose, occasioned by my too frequent vacillations. I knew, I felt often, in deep anguish of spirit, that my soul was not *deeply* fixed by faith in Him whom I desired to love. In such exercises, I saw my need of gaining that point, where the will of the creature is lost in that of the Creator, and entire or perfect love is the element of the being. But here, the love of self, inasmuch as there existed a fear of the responsibility of great profession, hindered my examining the subject of *Christian holiness* with deep and sincere interest, as one in which I should engage *myself*, until the autumn of 1836. (I had, from childhood been so situated as to hear such blessedness frequently spoken of.) At that time while witnessing the exercises of some devoted ones seeking inward purity, my own state was compared with theirs. I saw the distance between myself and them as seekers of the grace of life. I saw too, and O! how searching! the vast difference between myself, and Him whom I had called Father! At this time I took this subject—entire consecration, with the application of the promises,

closely in mind; secluded myself for its consideration, when, to my own astonishment, I found myself a wavering believer in it. Some, a few special ones, may realize this great attainment; but so nearly angelic is it, it cannot be suited to human nature every where—was my mental language. But my wearied, unsatisfied soul, rested not here with the subject. By a train of mental exercises too tedious to be mentioned, I came to the full and unwavering belief that Christ Jesus would save *any* and *all* of his desiring people from their sins, would they but believe. Yet, strange to be said, I did not then decide to come to the very point—make the entire consecration at the very time, *now*, though deeply impressed with a sense of the great want I was suffering, and yet bringing upon myself. My former devotion appeared superficial. I had indulged a selfishness—a reserve of the heart, of some portion of the heart, at every consecration made heretofore! so that for weeks, and months, I unceasingly cried for a willingness to be made holy. I could not wonder, should the reader exclaim, What a prayer! for my soul would repeat it, What a prayer! But to come to the point of my meaning, I should say I was willing for all, except a certain responsibility of walking in so narrow a way as would be implied in a profession to live free from sin. For a time I sought a resting place in good decisions; resolving to live heartily near my Saviour,—much in prayer—but would take the course of the majority of Christians in reference to the subject of sanctification, for the present. Need I say this was a dangerous place? What spiritual eye cannot see the danger? A heart unyielding to clear and known duty cannot be ever justified in His sight who requireth the *whole* soul. Thus I found it, to the deep regret of my heart, *now* not justified. Clouds and darkness rolled in upon me; and while attempting to carry my decisions into practice, my undesirable state was kept in open view; and though for a time my resolutions for prayer, and separation from that which was unholy, were kept rigorously, discouragement had unseen influence; insomuch that unconsciously my purpose was yielded, and general decline perceptible. The passing of days and weeks, was but the constant reminding that the influence of the creature's will brings deathlike blight, and lays low the cultivation of every Christian grace. The winter had passed which brought me to March, 1837, but the dreariness and bleakness of the mind had not gone: neither was there any sign of verdure, pure waters, and fruit. Yet seeing my state, having no rising hope for the better, while in that position, my judgment was called upon to compare the points; that of living in part to self, with that of entire, constant and everlasting consecration to the King of kings, and Lord of lords. In answer to earnest supplication, the value of eternal things, with the *privilege* of walking with Christ, were brought near, so that my judgment saw the exceeding benefit of living for holiness.

At this time, in this light, I made the decision. I felt, I *now* feel, that by divine grace, it was a *final* decision. I desired only to be prepared to live so as to fulfill the blessed commands, living for souls : by my hand it was recorded, by my heart it was repeated : to seek entire death to all but that which should please my Lord. Now my heart was set upon unreserved living to him who is invisible : a life of faith, purity of heart, present salvation from all sin. Here commenced my seeking this distinct, comprehensive attainment. Now my unutterable desire was realized. Searching the heart by the holy word, successive hours in prayer became absorbing ; meantime, I fell into many errors ; such as seeking a *preparation* to be made holy ; to be prepared by good works and good emotions, in order to exercise the true faith. And again, so great inconsistency did I see in happiness without holiness, that I resolved to be unhappy in mind, until pure in heart ; (I mention these particulars thinking perhaps they will meet the eye of some one thus inclined) thus I condemned myself most rigorously for feeling the least rising of joy, until *thoroughly* pure in heart. Gloomy agonizings and despairings were the companions of all my hours. Autumn again returned, and found my state not perceptibly changed. Now I seemed in a thicket. Not having had personal instruction from those who understood the deep workings of the heart when firmly set for that it does not fully understand, my errors had become multiplied. Where am I ? Have mercy, Lord ! expressed my heart. At this time I resolved to go to a "tented grove," where much, probably, would be said and felt of the "precious faith." My thirsty soul panted for instruction. This I received there ; and from those too, who had in clear remembrance the darkness from which they had just emerged ; they taught the way of faith ; all was clear to me, but one dark step ; this my philosophizing feelings would not assent to. Such a week I had never experienced ; fasting, praying and hearing seemed alike fruitless ; for I stopped at the main point, "believe that ye *have* the things that ye ask, and ye *have* them ;" and so tenacious did I find myself of my supposed understanding of the way to receive the blessing for which I plead, that a kind of triumph frequently arose, that I had been kept from so great an inconsistency ; saying, a thorough work I must have, if life itself must be a sacrifice. The privileges of this meeting had passed, and my object not attained. How insecure and wretched, did I then feel myself to be ! One day, with a journey of sixty miles, brought me to another meeting of the same character as the former. Through the privileges of this, I passed in like exercises, until nearly the last day of social exercises there. Increased inclinations to despair of becoming free from the bondage of sin, with a dread untold of a future life, long or short, without holiness, produced emotions unutterable. Not the excitement of the exercises of others did I seek ;

but close and convincing teaching. I now found I had gained nothing by long seeking, and by my repeated trials to get the heart *placed* aright. I seemed now farther from the salvation, than at any moment before. While feeling that the point of decision must soon turn, general despair, or victory, I called the promise to mind, "believe that ye have the things ye ask," &c., and asked, Can it be, it should be taken coldly, intellectually? would it, could it be thus? I saw my infidelity in this; decided to do it, hazarding all, for no other resort did I know; all else had come short. I took the blessed Book, turned to the promise, retired where no human eye was seeing, no human ear was hearing; knelt holding forth the hand of faith; resolving intellectually to believe it, to continue to believe it, and yet *believe*, irrespective of emotion; for my emotions now seemed dead; I must take it thus, or have it not at all. One half hour, and yet without perceptive change; constant intellectual exercise of counting myself dead to sin, and free therefrom, as I performed the condition required for it; (which is the simple believing, in itself) without any evidence of it, save the veracity of Him who had promised;—believing absolutely, hoping against hope, with an effort to remember the Father is ever the same, the Fountain for cleansing, opened by the crucified Jesus, ever the same. A long time elapsed, and I had yet to say *coldly intellectual*; yet I will, I *do believe*. Now a resting of spirit I began to realize, as I forgot self, while gazing at Christ; remembering when we cease from our own works, (or efforts) we enter into rest, the rest of faith. And lo! the darkness is gone! the way is clear! all was done by my Lord, and had been done since the promised redemption, would I only "*believe* unto righteousness." Then in a sense not known to me before, did I feel "the sacred awe that dares not move, and all the silent heaven of love." *All is God*, was my spirit's language. It is enough! All is well! Salvation! Self is gone and Christ liveth! Deep, unbroken, hallowed peace, with a silent triumph filled the soul, and more and more so, while confession was made thereof. Having received Christ Jesus by faith, my purpose was and is, so to walk in Him. (By faith we stand, by the moment! How dependent! Every moment the blood of sprinkling we believe for, by which we have acceptance.) Having, with all His creatures, the constant aid of divine grace, irrespective of sight, my soul shall ever ascend in faith; though it sometimes be upon the *naked arm* of absolute believing. Thanks be unto God who giveth the present victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! So let it be!

A STUDENT.

June, 1840.

FIRST PRINCIPLES.

Extract from Pipe on Sanctification.

Hearer. SIR, may I ask you a few questions concerning religion?

Preacher. Certainly, as many as you please; and I am glad that you begin to make such inquiries.

H. It is high time I did; for I confess that I have been too careless and indifferent about my spiritual concerns. I have not been what God requires, but hope soon to be in a better state.

P. This is very well; and God has promised, "If the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return to him, that he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon him." (Isaiah lv. 7.)

H. This is one of the things I wanted to know.—whether, after all my sins, I can hope for forgiveness from God? You have, however, satisfied my doubts on that head, by the Scripture you have mentioned.

P. However numerous, great and aggravated the sins of men may be; or how long soever they may have persisted in them; or how unprofitable and unworthy they may be in the sight of Heaven, if they forsake them and come to Jesus Christ, he says he "will in no wise cast them out." (John vi. 37.)

H. This is encouraging. But will not some think, that this is like giving a license to sin; for if men may be forgiven, do as they please, will they not sin the more?

P. There may be such vile persons who say, "Let us sin that grace may abound;" but such are in a most awful state and must be left to their righteous Judge. This is far from being my meaning; and the cause of your remark seems to be, that I am only speaking of the worst characters among men, when the truth is, that what I have said is more or less applicable to all; which, I think may be made clearly to appear.

H. That we may be worse in the sight of God than we imagine, may be true; for there are doubtless many sins committed which are forgotten; and many things may be sinful which we do not consider as such; and our self-love makes us gloss over many things which are not right before Him that tries the heart.

P. True: there is much more of this in the world than men are aware of, and this is one reason of their looking only to the more enormous offences; and hence conclude that there is much less sin in the earth than God's word declares.

H. How shall I come to the true knowledge of this business? How shall I see into "the exceeding sinfulness of sin?"

P. By the law of God contained in the Ten Commandments.

This is the glass which shows the present weak, sinful, and imperfect state of man. Here shine the glorious perfections of God, especially his greatness in commanding, his wisdom in appointing, and his justice in insisting on these rules of righteousness to his rational creatures. In this moral law, which is holy, just, and good, we behold his unspotted holiness, and transcendent excellency; and how impossible it is to break this law, and not forfeit his favor.

It is by this law, brought home to the conscience by the Spirit of God, that sinners discover their true state of mind, "for by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and by the law they read their condemnation, "for the law worketh wrath;" and being once broken, righteousness can never come by it to any soul; for "he that offends in one point" is considered as being "guilty of all;" and hence it can save none: but through the divine mercy it is used with other means as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be "justified by faith," for "if righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain." But who will affirm this? Who will say he died in vain? No: our salvation is wholly through him; and to him we must have recourse, or perish eternally.

Let me now present you with this law for this purpose; not to set you upon keeping it for your justification; but, first, as a means of convincing you of sin; and, secondly, as a rule of life for you to walk by, when you have obtained mercy of the Lord, and as that standard by which God will judge the world. (Rom. ii. 12.)

First Command. "Thou shalt have none other Gods but me."

God, the glorious maker and supporter of all things, by whose providence we are sustained, and by whose grace we are redeemed, is the only God we should acknowledge and worship; he alone is to be feared, loved, honored, and obeyed; and all other beings in heaven, earth, or hell, are to be considered as nothing, and totally disregarded, in comparison with him. And the worship we pay him must not be dead, formal, and hypocritical; but sincere, fervent, spiritual, grateful, and such as he requires in his holy word. All, therefore, who forget, neglect, despise, and hate him; all who forsake his ordinances, and refuse to pray to him, to praise and love him; all who offer him mere lip-service, and draw near to him in person, while their hearts are far from him; all who neglect to read or hear his holy word, that they may know his will and do it; and all who do not give their hearts to him, are breakers of this first commandment.—And now I leave you to judge whether you are guilty or not guilty.

Second Command. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous

God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me : and show mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

This commandment forbids all kind of idolatry, or the worshipping of the true and living God in an erroneous manner. It also forbids the substituting of the creature or created things in the place of the great Creator, seeking our happiness in them instead of him, or in any thing which stands in opposition to him. Whatever is loved, feared, obeyed, followed, and imitated more than God, is to us an idol ; that is our God. All inordinate affection places us in the same state. Thus the covetous man makes a god of his wealth ; the ambitious man of his honors ; and the voluptuous man, of his pleasures and sensual gratifications ; all which is contrary to the love of God, and to that worship and obedience which are due to him, and which are paid him by his servants ; and brings his displeasure down upon such as hate him, and upon their offspring who tread in their steps, to the third and fourth generation.

This commandment also forbids the broaching of human doctrines, creeds, and ceremonies, as coming from God ; of all superstitious services, fanatic devotion, cruel rites, and formal and hypocritical services : for God is a jealous God, and all attempts to impose upon or deceive him are vain and impious. He requires our hearts ; and if we refuse to offer them to him, whatever else we place them upon is idolatry and wickedness in His sight, who sees and knows us altogether. Now think : are you guilty or not guilty ?

Third Command. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain : for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

This commandment not only forbids the light and irreverent use of any of the names by which God has revealed himself to us in his holy word ; but all trifling with his nature, perfections, services, and government. There are some, who, upon any surprise, will exclaim, in an impious way, "Good Lord !" "Lord, bless us !" "Lord Jesus !" "God have mercy !" &c. Others will awfully swear by him, both in their mirth and malice ; and wish the bitterest wishes to themselves if they do, or do not, act thus or thus, which they think no more of, nor perhaps ever intended. Others will blaspheme God himself, or call upon him to exert his vengeance, to curse either persons or things which have displeased them, in defiance of that word, "Bless, and curse not." There are those also who will ridicule the exercises of piety, and those that engage in them by the divine command. But all such as do these things should remember, that He who sees, hears, and knows all things, will bring them to a strict account. Do you here plead guilty or not guilty ?

Fourth Command. "Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath

day. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thou hast to do ; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy manservant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

This commandment forbids the profanation of the Lord's day in the most solemn manner. If you should ask how this day is profaned, it is answered, By not remembering its institution, its design, its importance, and its superior excellence, when compared with that portion of our time which is dedicated to secular purposes. (Isai. lviii. 13, 14.) By spending it in worldly concerns ; buying, selling, laboring, unnecessary travels or visits ; or in idleness, neglecting the worship and service of God ; in feasting, revelling, gaming, or riot ; and, in short, doing any thing which may and ought to be done on working days, or neglecting to perform those services of piety and mercy which that day requires. Have you been or are you guilty of the breach of this commandment ?

Fifth Command. "Honor thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

By this commandment we learn that it is the duty of children to pay all due respect to their parents, and to manifest it by the most genuine expressions of affection and liberality ; avoiding stubbornness, self-will, and all unkind and ungrateful speeches and behavior : and as all who are placed over us in the order of Providence, whether ministers, magistrates, or masters, are in a sense parents, or at least ought so to be, it is incumbent upon us to fill up the duties of our several stations with fidelity, submission, and diligence : especially we ought to love and respect those ministers who are placed over us in the Lord, and esteem them highly in love for their work's sake.

It is admitted that it is equally the duty of superiors to perform their respective services towards such as are placed under them : and if they do them not, they must give a strict account to him who is the Lord of all. The blessing of heaven is, in this command, promised to the obedient. Ask yourself, then, whether this commandment has been carefully and religiously observed by you or not.

Sixth Command. "Thou shalt do no murder."

This commandment forbids every kind of murder whatever ; whether it be committed out of revenge, covetousness, pride, or lust.—Murder is a dreadful sin, highly provoking to God, shocking to human nature, and fills the consciences of the bloody wretches who are guilty of it with the most bitter remorse and terrifying accusations. Self-murder is, if possible, more shocking ; because it not only is such an opposition to God, and so perfectly unnatural in itself, but so com-

pletely excludes the possibility of repentance, as to make eternal perdition inevitable. Whatever, therefore, tends to murder ; whether anger, malice, excessive self-love, ambition, extravagance, distrust of God's providence, or any other cause, must be considered as a breach of this law : and were we to speak of the neglect of the soul, and the sins consequent upon it, I know not but this soul-murder may also be intended amongst the rest. Here, then, pause, and see how far you have, in heart and design, been a breaker of this divine law.

Seventh Command. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

This commandment forbids all sinful intercourse between the sexes, either in a married or single state ; all kinds of whoredom, lewdness, and impurity of the heart or senses : premeditated or sudden, secret or open, of our own contrivance or that of others. It enjoins chastity upon all, and an opposition to every word, person, place or thought that would infringe upon it. It is only known to God, and to the offenders themselves, how often and in how many ways this law is violated ! The apostle says, it is a shame even to speak of these abominations. Now, I leave you to judge, if the heart is concerned in this matter, how oft you have transgressed this command.

Eighth Command. "Thou shalt not steal."

As no man possesses any right, human or divine, to take away my character, property, or person, without my consent ; so neither have I any right to take away his ; if either I or he do this, then the offending party breaks this righteous commandment. This law also forbids injustice in 'all its forms and bearings : unjust transactions in business ; unjust lawsuits ; unjust accounts, weights, and measures ; and all impositions upon the ignorant and unwary ; all pilfering and knavery ; all extortion and over-reaching ; all borrowing with an intention to deceive ; unfaithfulness in servitude ; and cruel neglect in defrauding masters towards the persons they employ ;—all these, and such like things, as well as avowed felony and robbery, are here forbidden. To which may be added, the keeping back the heart from God, and neglecting to offer those praises, and perform those services, which are due to the Divine Majesty. (Mal. iii. 8, 9.)—Examine yourself whether you are clear. Guilty or not guilty ?

Ninth Command. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

This commandment forbids all false depositions which any man may bring against another to his injury, either in a court of justice or elsewhere. Perjury, lying and deceit, are hateful both to God and man. Whoever is guilty of them stamps his character with disgrace and infamy. All backbiting, slander, and evil-speaking, in a more private way, are of the same family, and are condemned by the same law. O ! how oft is the tongue employed in opposition to the heart and to known truth ! How often may it be said of the tongues of

many, that they are "set on fire of hell," by the mischief they produce! Put this question to your heart, Have I never been guilty, from fear, or shame, or covetousness, of uttering falsehood? Or this, Have I never brought an unjust accusation against another, or never aimed at misrepresentations to his prejudice? Am I, in this respect, altogether clear?

Tenth Command. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his."

This commandment condemns all discontent and dissatisfaction in the situation in which Providence has placed us; it also forbids all envy at others' possessions or prosperity, with all unjust and unworthy attempts to raise ourselves by effecting their downfall. It forbids all inordinate self-love, and all those passions and desires which would lead us to take to ourselves what of right and justice belongs to another. Covetousness is idolatry, and the chief spring of all the injustice and deceit that is in the world; and it might be added, of its miseries also. Here then you may examine yourself, and know whether your heart has ever gone astray, and whether in this respect you are guilty or not guilty before a heart-searching God.

H. Alas! I confess myself a guilty sinner before God. I have broken this holy law, and exposed myself to its curse and condemnation: and if I cannot be saved by conforming in future to its precepts, on what ground can I hope to be saved?

P. The goodness of God must be the ground of your hope. Thus the Psalmist prayed when distressed on account of his sins, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to thy mercy, remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord. (Psal. xxv. 7.) And then it is added, "Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way." (Ver. 8.)

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PROGRESS IN PIETY.

Is it not the habit of most Christians, after the first fervors of conversion, to content themselves with a uniform practice of the regular duties of religion, maintaining a fixed temper of mind, and expecting no very appreciable advances in piety, except, it may be, in seasons of extraordinary revivals? At least it is unquestionable that the proportion is very small in the general church, who, in the strong language of David, "pant" after the Lord. The Christian course is represented as a "race." How would it suit for a racer to stop at frequent intervals in his progress, or to start with ardor, and then, folding his arms, deliberately *walk* to the goal, as if

no prize challenged him and no spectators gazed at him? Do most Christians emptyify the strong language of St. Paul, "Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us?" What a spectacle would the church exhibit if each member maintained the progressive spirit of his religion! Of course the collective mass would be progressive; the tern revival would become obsolete, for the perpetual spirit of the church would be lively and active. The cultivation of a strenuous piety would inevitably lead to strong sympathy for the unconverted, and the accession to the numbers of the church would be proportionate to the accession to its piety. *The grand characteristic of the Millennial church will be the distinct and practical recognition of this principle.* Its approach will be indicated by the growth, and its consummation accomplished by the entire prevalence of personal piety. How desirable, then, that we wake up the church to regard it!

By what means can we make more progress in personal piety? Is not the first reason of our small progress, (first in the order of time as well as in influence,) the want of a *definite aim* towards it? It is to be feared that most Christians entertain but a feeble conviction of the *duty* of spiritual progress—of "going on," as St. Paul expresses it. We abandon ourselves to the control of casual circumstances; and are asleep or awake as the influences around us may be dull or quickening. Is not this almost universally the case? Now what would we think of an artizan who should enter his shop and thoughtlessly take up his tools and apply himself indiscriminately to work on whatever materials came first to hand, and pursue this course from day to day until his apartments should be filled with fragments of work, with nothing complete—no definite and final plan? What of an architect who should lay his foundations without reference to the proposed building, or a navigator who should spread his sails alike to all winds, favorable and adverse, contemplating his desired port on his map, but not on his compass? In religion more than any thing else we want distinctness, directness. Single out then the particular grace in which you are most deficient, and apply yourself unto it distinctly and daily until you have attained it. You can pray for other blessings, and perform other duties; but let this one be foremost. Think about it, plan for it, bend every thing towards it. This advice is applicable not merely to individual graces, but to the great summary blessing of sanctification. Whether we attain it gradually or instantaneously, we must address ourselves to its pursuit directly and earnestly or never obtain it. It is not an accident that may or may not occur in our experience, but an object to be aimed at and labored for.

Again, we should make it a rule in our devotions, especially in prayer, *never to fail to receive immediate and sensible communications from God.* The excellent Mr. Benson maintained this resolution to the last; and those who have read his memoirs know the result. This is entirely a voluntary matter with ourselves. God is always willing to bless us. If we apply to him in faith, nothing can interfere. The rule we now suggest would preserve the mind in a state suited for the ready exercise of faith. How remarkably remiss are we in our most solemn devotions. Would we approach mere human greatness with the same indifference as we do God? Could we converse with an earthly sovereign with the same heartlessness? Would a man beg for his *life*, as we plead for our *souls*? Christian, rouse thyself! Endeavor to feel more fully the reality of the divine presence, especially in the

closet. Carry to the place of prayer the purpose *not to cease thine importunity till thou art blessed*. The mere purpose will destroy most of those desultory thoughts which intrude into the sacred retirement, and render its devotions vague and ineffectual.

If Christ were visibly present at the hour of prayer, would we apply to him as we now do? Would not our every word be more direct, more confident? And is he less really present, though invisible? Can we not habituate ourselves to a vivid and immediate realization of his presence? Who will doubt it?

Another reason is our casual way of reading the scriptures. We frequently say, but how seldom do we *feel*, that the scriptures are the Word of God. What would be the moral effect of a daily interview with an angel? But what archangel could speak to us as God speaks? If the heavens should open above us only once in our lives, and we behold the excellent glory and converse with God, would not the scene stamp our whole character? Would we be ordinary men afterwards? Would, not its glory, as in the case of Moses on descending from the mount, continue to beam around our persons? But God does converse as infallibly with us in his word. Alas! we do not intently apprehend it. The scriptures no doubt have an immense influence even on the collective mind of communities where they are read, but it is amazing that they do not imbue and dilate more fully individuals' minds. If the perusal of classic writings is so important for the formation of a vigorous and elegant intellect—if the study of the models of art is so effectual to the improvement of genius, what ought to be the effect of a daily converse with the conceptions of the Infinite Mind? Now if the classic records or the celebrated specimens of art were to be glanced at, as slightly, though as habitually, as the scriptures, would they ever impress their excellences on the susceptibilities of genius? They must be examined; a paragraph or a feature must be studied, thoroughly, laboriously. In like manner should the Scriptures be studied. In studying the models of taste, not only must their import be comprehended by the student, but the spirit, the *anima* which actuates the writer or the artist must be caught—this is the highest attainment of genius. There is much reading but little studying of the scriptures. Our Saviour in his command uses the strongest language, "*Search the scriptures.*"

The point of our remarks is simply that *we should study the word of God daily with express reference to the improvement of our piety*. Such a method universally used, would develop an efficacy in the truth which would surprise the world. It would not be merely like the efficacy of those occasional circumstances or impulses which we usually depend upon for spiritual improvement, nor merely like that of the hortative addresses of the pulpit. These are all enfeebled by human frailty. It would be potent and sublime from its association with immediate inspiration and with the purest and grandest truths, such as occupy angel minds. A Christian mind thoroughly conversant with the scriptures, and accustomed to drink from them as from a fountain of spiritual refreshment, may not manifest such a convulsive zeal and spasmodic action as one which depends on impulsive influences; but it will always be more profoundly vigorous, and serenely spiritual, like the deep and steady river in contrast with its tributary stream that leaps and worries down the neighboring hill side. Search then the scriptures, with the prayer that God would "*sanctify you by his truth,*" and remember that his "*word is truth*."

Another reason of the small effect of our efforts to advance in religion frequently is the indulgence of some cherished sin. There is no state of mind which will allow of spiritual progress but that in which we are "*pressing*" forward. One sin,

however apparently insignificant, may interfere with the most powerful influences, like as a small object near the eye may exclude the light of the very sun. "*If I regard iniquity in my heart,*" says the Psalmist, "*the Lord will not hear me.*" Do you complain, Christian reader, of the barrenness of your soul, of the feeble influence of all the means of grace upon your heart? Pause a moment and inquire if there is not some neutralizing element, some favored, perhaps concealed sin. Rest not till it is expelled. Remember the struggle is for your soul; that one sin may be your ruin; unless removed it will be a spring, the secret machinery of which extends under all your future destinies, and which, touched some time or other, may explode with universal wreck your whole eternity. Lay aside therefore every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset thee, and run with patience the race that is set before thee.

A. S.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We believe the doctrine of Christian Perfection to be taught in the Bible, and that, too, very directly and plainly. And we find nothing contradictory of that doctrine, though there are some texts which, improperly understood, appear in collision with those which teach it.

We now introduce from an Essay on Holiness, an illustration of several of those passages of scripture.

"For there is no man that sinneth not." 1 Kings viii. 46. On this passage, an eminent divine* says, "The word translated *sinneth*, in the original, is in the future tense, which is often used for an *indefinite* tense in the *potential* mood, because the Hebrews have no such mood or tense. Therefore our translators would only have done justice to the *original*, as well as to the context, if they had rendered the whole clause, *There is no man that may not sin*; instead of *There is no man that sinneth not*." The meaning is evidently, there is no man who is not liable to sin; and that a man actually sins, when he actually departs from God. Now *peccability*, or a *liableness to sin*, is not *indwelling sin*; for angels, Adam and Eve, were all *liable to sin* in their *sinless state*. And that there are some men who do not actually sin, is indubitable: 1. From the hypothetical phrase in the context, *if any man sin*, which shows that their sinning is not unavoidable. 2. From God's *anger* against those that sin, which is immediately mentioned. Hence it appears that so certain as God is not angry with all his people, some of them do not sin in the sense of the wise man: and 3, from Solomon's intimating, that these very men who have sinned, or have actually departed from God, may *bethink themselves, repent, and turn to God with ALL their heart, and with ALL their soul*.

"His angels he charged with folly." Job iv. 18. Therefore some

* Rev. J. Fletcher.

deny Christian perfection. But if this passage disproves the doctrine of Christian perfection, it overthrows angelical perfection too ; that is, it proves too much, and therefore proves nothing. The plain meaning of the passage is, God alone is *absolutely* perfect ; the very angels having no wisdom in comparison with his omniscience, none but what they have received, and are dependent on him for its continuance.

"Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints ; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight." Job xv. 15.

This passage holds up the same doctrine as that last quoted. All the beauty, grandeur, and glory of the heavens, are *derived*, perishable, and bear no resemblance to underived, eternal excellency. God knoweth that his saints are finite, dependent, accountable to him, and on earth, (at least,) are mutable ; but, notwithstanding all this, they may be holy, i. e., possess a finite, derived perfection, according to their nature.

"If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me : if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." Job ix. 20.

Canne on this text, refers the reader to Prov. xxvii. 2 : "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth ; a stranger, and not thine own lips." Therefore if Job would not, in a self-justifying spirit, assert his *perfect* holiness, it is enough that the Almighty has pronounced him "A perfect and an upright man." Chap. ii. 3. But even this rule, that "others must praise us, and not we ourselves," is not without exceptions. There are circumstances which may drive an humble man to assert his integrity and virtue. So Paul was "not a whit behind the chief of the apostles : " so he and John professed to be "perfect Christians." Phil. iii. 15, and 1 John iv. 17.

"Behold, I am vile ; what shall I answer thee ? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." Job xl. 4.

This self-abasement is what every one feels who has perfect humility, which is a principal branch of Christian perfection. The more we see of God's infinite purity and holiness, the more we see how far below this our derived and finite perfection is. But this humble language of Job, does not invalidate the testimony which God himself repeatedly gave concerning his servant. See chap. i. 1, 8 ; and ii. 3.

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear : but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job xlii. 5, 6.

Here again we have the language of *perfect humility*. Job had such a discovery of the holiness, glory, and majesty of the eternal God, that it sunk him into the deepest self-abhorrence, and most profound repentance. This passage, therefore, instead of overthrowing the doctrine of gospel perfection, directly confirms it, by furnishing a remarkable instance of *perfect humility* and *perfect repentance*, which are essential parts of it.

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job xiv. 4.

We acknowledge that this passage implies our moral depravity by nature. But when Job says, "*not one* can bring a clean thing out of an unclean," he certainly means, "not one" who has not infinite power. Nothing is too hard for the Lord to do; and he has promised to "sprinkle clean water upon us and we shall be *clean*." David prays, "Create in me a *clean* heart, O God. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be *clean*." So the prophet: "Wash you, make you *clean*. Be ye *clean* that bear the vessels of the Lord." Christ said to the disciples, "Now ye are *clean* through the word which I have spoken unto you."* The above passage, therefore, does not invalidate the doctrine of perfect holiness.

"What is man that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job xv. 14.

Eliphaz probably means here, 1. that no man is *clean* or *righteous* by nature; 2. that most men are far from being clean or righteous at all, since there are comparatively few that truly love and fear God; and 3. that the best of men, in purity and righteousness, are infinitely inferior to the Most High. All this we acknowledge; but to take the passage in any other sense, would be to make it contradict the general tenor of scripture.

"How, then, can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight: How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?" Job xxv. 4, 5, 6.

These words of Bildad the Shuhite, may easily be reconciled to the other parts of scripture which assert Christian holiness. He doubtless means to show the absolute and incomparable perfection of the Almighty, which makes nothing against the inferior and derived perfection of his saints. We are "justified by faith," and made "*clean* through the word of Christ." *The moon*, or even the sun, *shineth not*, when compared with the brilliancy of the divine character; *the stars are not pure in his sight*, if brought to vie with his immutable perfections. The heavenly bodies, being inanimate, have never sinned; but move or stand, and glow at their Maker's command. How much less, then, shall man, fallen and depraved by nature, a helpless worm of the dust, vie with Jehovah in excellency and power! We think the Gentile sage uttered nothing against evangelical justification and sanctification, though he attributes absolute perfection not to man, nor to the heavenly bodies, but to God alone.

"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Prov. xx. 9.

* Ezk. xxxvi. 25; Ps. ii. 7, 10; Isaiah i. 16, and lii. 11; John xv. 3.

1. "Perhaps Solomon here intends to reprove a boasting Pharisee: and certainly no man of that description can say with propriety, *I have made my heart clean*. The law of faith excludes all proud boasting, and if we say, with the temper of the Pharisee, *that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*; for we have pride, and pharisaic pride too, which, in the sight of God, is perhaps the greatest of all sins.

2. But Solomon's question may be evangelically answered thus; "The man in whom thy father David's prayer is answered, *Create in me a clean heart, O God* :—The man who has properly regarded St. James's direction, *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded* :—The man who has obeyed God's command, *Wash thy heart from iniquity, that thou mayest be saved* : Or the man referred to by our Lord, Matt. v. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*. That man, we say, can testify to the honor of the blood *which cleanseth from all sin, which has made his heart clean*."

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." Eccl. vii. 20.

1. "Perhaps Solomon here uses the words of an objector, as he evidently does verse 16, *Be not righteous over much, neither make thyself over wise*. If so, the wise man is not accountable for the truth of this assertion. 2. But if these are Solomon's own words, he might have the same meaning that Paul has, Rom. iii. 23. *All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*. Canne, although a Calvinist, gives it this sense by referring to these words of the apostle. 3. The original of this word *sinneth*, in Judges xx. 16, means *to miss a mark*. And if it be taken in that low sense here, the passages perfectly agree with Christian holiness; for *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and misses not the mark*; i. e. whose understanding never errs, mistakes, and involuntary comes short of doing all the good that he would do." Perfect holiness does not imply perfect knowledge. Either of the above may be considered a fair construction of the passage: but Solomon did not mean to contradict other Scriptures, which in scores of instances, assert the doctrine of perfect holiness.

"Then said I, *Wo is me!* for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Isai. vi. 5.

This passage is similar to Job xlii. 5, 6. A sight of the purity, glory, and majesty of God, humbled the prophet as in the dust before him. It was a common opinion with the Jews, that if a man saw the Lord, he would die: this appears to have been the sentiment of the prophet; and hence his exclamation, *Wo is me! for I am undone*. Also, a conviction of his own sinfulness, and the wickedness of his

neighbors, heightened his apprehensions; probably he thought the Lord would destroy him and them together. But this passage proves nothing against Christian holiness; for in the next verse but one we are told, a seraph said to him, "*Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.*" Isaiah was then a witness of instantaneous and complete sanctification.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isai. lxiv. 6.

"This passage refers to the pharisaic righteousness of unhumiliated professors; which may be called the righteousness of impenitent pride, rather than the righteousness of humble faith; and is the same with that which Paul compares to *dung*." Nothing can exceed the impurity and impiety of such a righteousness; hence the strong expressions used by the prophet and the apostle in denouncing it. But this has nothing to do with the evangelical righteousness of faith, for that is the righteousness of the saints, and is compared to, "*fine linen, clean and white*;" (Rev. xix. 8.) and is obtained by "*washing our robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.*" Rev. vii. 14.

"And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other."

1. Every contention is not sinful. The apostle says himself, "*Contend for the faith. Be angry and sin not. It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.*"—Jesus Christ did not break the law of love, when he looked around WITH ANGER upon the Pharisees; being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. Nor does Moses charge sin upon God, where he says, "The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation."

2. With respect to the word [*παροξυσμος*] contention or provoking; it is used in a good, as well as a bad sense. Thus Heb. x. 24, we read of [*παροξυσμον αγαπης*] a CONTENTION, or a PROVOKING unto love and good works. 3. These apostles were holy men, but like all others, were imperfect in knowledge, and understanding; and as neither of them was, nor professed to be, inspired how to act in this case, they differed in opinion. Each was fixed and sincere in his own views, and each acted according to his own judgement. But as it is not said, nor intimated, that either of them contended uncharitably, or sinfully, the passage has no bearing against the doctrine of holiness.

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I

would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Rom. vii. 14—25.

Perhaps no portion of scripture has been wrested to the destruction of souls, or at least to their unspeakable injury, more frequently than this. It is taken to mean, "That no Christian can be holy in this life, since Paul, the chief of the apostles, is here representing his present experience; beyond which, it is presumption for us to think of advancing."

Against this interpretation, I have the following objections.

1. The whole passage exactly represents the exercises of a sinner under conviction of sin, but unconverted: therefore, to say it represents the Christian's present state, is the same as saying, that awakened sinners and converted souls, are in exactly the same state.

2. It represents Paul as being *carnal, sold under sin*, and *serving the law of sin*, when (Phil. iii. 15.) he professes Christian perfection, and says, *To be carnally minded is death—The carnal mind is enmity against God*, (Rom. viii. 6, 7.) and reproves the Corinthians for being *carnal*. 1 Cor. iii. 1, 3, 4.

3. This interpretation of the passage makes Paul represent himself as being *sold under sin, in captivity to the law of sin*, crying out, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* and three verses afterwards proclaiming, *the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ HATH MADE ME FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH*. A direct and positive contradiction, according to the above interpretation; plainly evincing that the above was not the apostle's meaning.

4. It represents the apostle as *serving sin*, consequently as being a child of the devil, a servant of sin, and in the way to destruction; for we read, *He that commiteth sin is of the devil.—Servants ye are, to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.—The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

5. This interpretation makes Paul contradict himself, Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zephaniah, Malachi,

Peter, James, John, Jude, and our blessed Lord ; who all hold up the doctrine of holiness. Therefore this construction of the passage cannot be true.

But if the above is not the meaning of the apostle, our next inquiry is, What does he mean in the verse under consideration? We say, Paul is here representing his own *past* experience : perhaps what he felt during the three days after he was struck to the earth, and previous to his baptism, wherein *he was without sight, neither did eat nor drink.* (Acts. ix. 4—18.) The passage also describes the past experience of every regenerate soul; but the miserable apostate and awakened sinner, are the only characters who feel this to be their *present* experience. The principal objection that I have heard or read against this construction of the passage, is, The apostle uses the *present tense*. To this I answer,

1. The subject is *introduced* in the *past* tense, (Rom. vii. 7.) and the past tense only is used until the fourteenth verse ; then, continuing the same subject, he changes the tense to the present, which he uses till the second verse in the next chapter, when, continuing the account of his experience, he again takes the past tense. This changing of the tense is common among sacred and profane writers ; and is done to heighten the interest which the reader takes in the subject, being well calculated to make the narrative more lively and forcible.

2. This *hypotyposis*, or relating things in the present tense, whether they are past or future, is common in the Bible. Gen. vi. 17, we read, "Behold, I, even I, *do* bring (i. e. I *will* bring, 120 years hence) a flood upon the earth to destroy all flesh." 2 Sam. xxii. 1, 35, 48. "When the Lord had delivered David out of the hands of all his enemies, and given him peace in all his borders, he spake the words of this song.—He *teacheth* (i. e. he taught) my hands to war, so that a bow of steel *is* (i. e. was) broken by my arms :—It is God that *avengeth* (i. e. hath avenged,) me—and that *bringeth* (hath brought) me forth from mine enemies." Future things are often expressed in the present tense. Joel i. 6. 18, it is said,—"A nation *is* (i. e. shall) come up upon my land, strong, and without number.—How *do* (i. e. *will*) the beasts groan ! The herds of cattle *are* (i. e. shall be) perplexed, because they *have* (i. e. shall have) no pasture.

But if it is objected against this interpretation, "That this experience is attended with *delight in the law of God after the inward man* ; which no unconverted soul feels : " I answer, 1. The Pharisees *for a season rejoiced in the burning and shining light of John the baptist.* 2. Herod heard him *with delight, and did many things* by way of obedience. And 3. Awakened sinners generally have a kind of penitential *delight* in prayer, reading the Bible and other good

books, in meditation, hearing sermons and Christian conversation.—But this is no proof that the Pharisees, Herod, or such penitents, have passed from death unto life

This passage, therefore affords no support to the Antinomian, or carnal professor. But as Samson, who was taken to make sport for his enemies, pulled down their temple over their heads ; so this scripture, brought to buoy up the unholy in their hopes of heaven, if properly understood, demolishes all hope of heaven, without present, perfect holiness ; by showing that what they call a *Christian* experience, is the experience of one who is yet an heir of wrath, and a candidate for perdition, though struggling to get in the way of life.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

MEDITATION ON HOLINESS.

O worship God in the beauty of holiness—*Psalms* xcvii. 9.

What a delightful theme does this passage of holy writ afford for meditation.

Thy nature, O my God, is essentially pure and holy. It is this that sheds a glorious lustre over all the other perfections of thy nature. Well may adoring angels cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty ! It is this that renders thee the object of reverence, love and delight. Thy holiness is immutable. Thou art invariable in holiness however thy dispensations may change. While thy works fully proclaim thy power, wisdom and designs—holiness is stamped on all—shines forth in all. Thy Providences are all holy, and tend to promote holiness throughout Creation. Thy blessed word is holy ! a fountain of holiness—an overflowing source of holy truth streaming out and beaming forth to illumine our darkness, to cheer our gloom. Although as sinners we fear and tremble at a view of thy holiness—smiting our breasts we exclaim, Wo be unto us, polluted creatures ! we have seen the Lord in holiness ! whither shall we flee from his presence, or whither shall we hide ourselves from his holy, all searching sight ?—yet a voice of mercy comes forth from these holy oracles, holy as cheering, “ Be ye therefore holy, for I the Lord your God am holy ”—“ This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” All the divine ordinances are fitted to promote holiness ; inward and outward holiness. “ O my soul, come and worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”

Every act of worship should be holy. Well may we pray in the sweet language of the poet—

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“ Let every act of worship be,
Like our espousals, Lord, to thee ;
Like the blest hour, when, from above,
We first received the pledge of love.”

Inspire thou the thoughts of our hearts, that we may truly worship in the beauty of holiness. Let my heart be pure, my thoughts holy, my feelings and exercises conformable to thy nature, thy heavenly perfection.

O ! there is a beauty, an unspeakable and transcendently glorious beauty, in thy manifested perfections, O my God ! It shines in its most lovely form in the person and character of my Saviour.

“ Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brightest shone,
The justice or the grace.

Truth is holy, justice holy, goodness and grace holy. I must be like him. I must be conformed to the image of the Son of God. I must choose him in preference to all beside ; love him as an object of infinite delight. My feelings must centre here, and be fixed, “no more to rove.” Then shall I worship in spirit and in truth. All my ransomed powers shall be employed to worship in the beauty of holiness. Then will there be a simplicity, a fitness, a symmetry, a moral grandeur, in the motions and exercises of my soul in all its acts of holy worship. A calm and heavenly peace, a self possession, a holy resignation, a steady reliance and unshaken trust in him, who will keep the soul in perfect peace and security. Now, O my God, dost thou not call me from the innermost temple of thy holiness, to come and worship thee in the beauty of holiness. My feeble soul stretches her wings to fly at thy bidding—to come at thy invitation. My first act is to bow to thy mandates, accept the soul cheering invitation. Beautify my soul and all my acts with thy salvation. I will rejoice in thy holiness.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

We feel ourselves under great obligations to our friends who have furnished matter for our pages, and we most earnestly request the continuance of their favors. We had the misfortune to lose what communications we had on hand with the exception of those selected for the August number ; we are therefore under the necessity of calling on our friends for immediate help.

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

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NO. 3.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

A MEDITATIVE HABIT.

It was one of the philosophical rules of Pythagoras and his disciples to review, by close meditation, the events of each day. Cicero, though adhering to a different sect of philosophy, adopted the rule, merely for its intellectual advantage. He found that it invigorated his memory,—a faculty to which the ancients attached the highest importance. He tells us that he practised the precept daily. The rule is infinitely more applicable to Christians. Summerfield was in the habit of selecting a text every morning, as the theme of his meditations during the day,—a point around which his thoughts could revolve at every interval of leisure, and to which he could summon them away from every casual and especially every hurtful suggestion of the senses or of the tempter.

The formation of a *meditative habit*,—who can doubt its value to the Christian character? How entirely would it transform most professors of religion! What stability and energy, and dignity, would it impart to their conduct! How much more profoundly would they comprehend and appreciate their religion!

Let us not be misunderstood. We do not mean merely a habit of *sobriety*, much less a moping, ruminating reserve; but a habit of frequent, of daily meditation on scripture doctrine—of self-inspection, and of self-comparison with the scripture standard of moral character. We mean such a habit as every literary man finds it necessary to cultivate in respect to his intellectual improvement,—close and frequent application to his books and his subjects.

Now is not this one of the means by which Christianity is adapted to raise up the mass of popular mind? Was Christianity designed to exert only an indirect agency in the intellectual elevation of man; to

furnish nutriment for his heart, but not for his mind? This is as far as the Christian world has generally allowed its influence to extend, but it is a mistake. Its immediate purpose is the correction of the heart; but it is adapted and designed to raise up, by a direct application, the intellectual and the social condition of man. It is *the* instrument for the elevation of the total condition of the world. We are beginning to recognize this fact, and to make direct application of religious principles to individual social evils, as legalized intemperance, slavery, war. Now, who doubts that the improvement of our minds is a moral duty of even higher obligation than the care of our health! Who doubts that the time will come when this point will be so clearly understood that the Christian who neglects his mental cultivation, will be considered a criminal; more criminal than if he should deliberately ruin his health by declining food? Alas, how novel, though reasonable, is such a thought at present!

By intellectual improvement we do not mean here the cultivation of particular faculties, or the study of particular sciences, but that general enlargement and invigoration of the intellectual nature which should be the object of all mental discipline. Now what we say is, that *the popular influence of religion should have this effect. Wherever it is eminent it has this effect.* Who has not been struck by the strong good sense, the tranquil energy, the mental integrity and symmetry which some persons seem to attain at once on receiving the blessing of sanctification? It sets them to *thinking*, as well as feeling and acting. Who does not see in the character of the sacred oracles this adaptation of religion? How are they adorned with every attraction of intellect; how unparalleled their poetry; how profound their logic; how characteristic their biography! What substance for thought teems in every text! These antique records stood in this late age confessed by friends and foes to be unparalleled in mere intellectual glories among all the productions of the human mind.

If this is the tendency of Christianity, how can each individual bring it to bear on his own nature more effectually than by maintaining a *meditative habit*?

Such a habit would in the first place promote our knowledge of religious truth. What an ample field does the Bible afford of "all delectable flowers and fruits." Each doctrine is a golden vein, leading into the great mind of the whole. Now if we should combine with our daily scripture reading, daily meditation upon the truths which we read, how would it deepen our spiritual knowledge. It is wonderful how ignorant most laymen are of the Christian doctrines. They have vague ideas of the essential ones, but how few of them can give clear statements of the nature of faith, the witness of the Spirit, the atonement, the trinity, &c. It is a good thing that in the experience of all Christians these truths are indirectly involved; but it would be

better if, in addition, they could be theoretically understood. God has not judged them unworthy of being revealed; we should not deem them unworthy of being studied. The habit we recommend would make us *scriptural* Christians. The hallowed sentiments of the scriptures would be more familiar to our minds, and their beautiful phraseology more common in our speech.

Secondly, It would give greater decision and fixedness to the mind. By such a course we would test and estimate the grounds of our faith. We would be saved from the frequent misgivings which attend a desultory minded Christian. Settled in our doctrines, we would be more uniform in our conduct, and more unwavering in our experience. We would act more from principle than impulse. Our whole bearing as Christians would become more vigorous and determined. And,

Third, From this state would result a more regular frame of feeling. Is it not the case that Christians more than others are subject to vicissitudes of feeling? It is not occasioned by their piety, but their weakness. How many caprices of feeling and useless anxieties would be prevented by enlarged views and fixed principles in religion! There is no Christian minister who has not met with cases of profound wretchedness, occasioned by wrong views of Christian doctrine; and these views are frequently too inveterate to be corrected. They would have been prevented by a better knowledge of scripture theology.

Fourth, Who can estimate the effect on the general church, which such a habit among its individual members would produce?

We might enumerate more fully the advantages of the course we recommend, but they are so very obvious as not to need it. Those which we have barely alluded to, commend it to us strongly. An individual or a church characterized by them, must be better qualified for all the duties of the Christian life, than most Christians are at present. The whole intellectual and moral nature would be strengthened and ennobled by it.

ALPHA.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PERFECT LOVE.

When flow the living streams of life,
From perfect love's exhaustless source,
It quenches all the flames of strife,
And calms the passions in their course.

Guide to Christian Perfection.

It slakes the ardent, painful thirst,
And fully satiates desire ;
Inspires the calm confiding trust,
For all our panting souls require.

Then fear and doubt no more perplex ;
Peace like a copious river flows ;
The inward wars which used to vex,
Are hushed to sweet and calm repose.

When perfect love has leavened all
Thy passions, by its hallowing power,
It saves from sin's perplexing thrall,
Which marred the peace of many an hour.

Now springs that calm and constant hope,
By which the soul securely rides
Amidst life's storms ; it bears us up,
Though roar the winds and roll the tides.

It gives to every virtue birth,
Maturing all the fruits of grace ;
And brings the life of heaven on earth,
And speeds us on the Christian race.

It sheds o'er all life's scenes a charm ;
Brings happiness unknown before ;
It kindles up devotion warm,
To worship, wonder, and adore.

U.

WESLEY'S LETTERS.

TO LADY M——.

London, August 17, 1764.

MY DEAR LADY,—Since I had the pleasure of yours, I have hardly had an hour that I could call my own ; otherwise I should not have delayed writing so long, as I have a very tender regard for you, and an earnest desire that you should become altogether a Christian. I cannot be content with your being ever so harmless or regular in your behavior, or even exemplary in all externals : nay, more than all this you have received already, for you have the fear of God. But shall you stop here ? God forbid. This is only the beginning of wisdom. You are not to end here : fear shall ripen into love. You shall know, (perhaps very soon) that love of God which passeth

knowledge. You shall witness the kingdom of God within you ; even righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

It is no small instance of the goodness of God toward you, that you are conscious of your want ; your want of living faith. And his goodness herein is more remarkable, because almost all your neighbors would set you down for a right good believer. O beware of those flatteries ! Hold fast the conviction that God has given you !—Faith, living, conquering, loving faith, is undoubtedly the thing you want. And of this you have frequently a taste to encourage you in pressing forward, such is the tender mercy of Him that loves you ; such his desire that you should receive all his precious promises ! Do not think they are afar off. Do not imagine you must stay long (years or months) before you receive them. Do not put them off a day, an hour ! Why not now ? Why should you not look up this instant and see, as it were, Jesus Christ set forth, evidently set forth, crucified before your eyes ? O hear his voice ! “ Daughter, be of good cheer ; thy sins are forgiven thee ! ” “ Say not in thy heart, Who shall go up into heaven, or who shall go down into the deep ? ” No ; “ The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. ” — “ Lord I believe ; help my unbelief. ”

Joy in the Holy Ghost is a precious gift of God, but yet tenderness of conscience is still greater ; and this is for you. Just ready,—

“ The speechless awe which dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.”

I am no great friend to solitary Christianity ; nevertheless, in so peculiar a case as yours, I think an exception may be admitted. It does seem most expedient for you to retire out of the city, at least for a season, till God has increased your strength : for the company of those who know not God, who are strangers to the religion of the heart, especially if they are sensible, agreeable people, might quite damp the grace of God in your soul.

You cannot oblige me more than by fully opening your mind to me : there is no danger of your tiring me. I do not often write such long letters ; but when I write to you I am full of matter. I seem to see you just before me, a poor, feeble, helpless creature, but just upon the point of salvation ; upright of heart, (in a measure,) full of real desires for God, and emerging into light. The Lord take you wholly.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PECULIAR DANGERS ATTENDING A STATE OF HOLINESS.

It may, perhaps, be an unexpected remark to some, but it is, nevertheless, true, that a state of holiness has its peculiar dangers. On no class of persons has Satan fixed his eye with such intense interest and such unmitigated hostility as on those who have given their whole hearts to God. There is no cause which he hates so much as that of holiness; and of course nothing will gratify him so much as to lead astray and destroy its possessors. He knows perfectly well the points on which they are least guarded; and it is in those directions that he will assail them. It will be the object of the following remarks to point out some of the dangers which have been referred to.

1. *Neglect of the ordinances of religion.*—One of the dangers to which this class of persons is especially exposed, is a disposition to neglect, in an improper and undue degree, the ordinances of religion. Their love is so ardent, their faith so strong, their reconciliation with God so entire, that their minds, soaring above all outward ceremonies and all visible and material helps of growth in grace, maintain an almost immediate and direct communication with their heavenly Father. It is hardly too much to say, that they converse with God face to face, as a man converseth with his brother. It is in this delightful state of mind that Satan, with that malicious and hellish ingenuity which is natural to him, suggests to them that the positive institutions and methods of worship and of the religious life, such as the Sabbath, public prayer and preaching, baptism, and the Lord's supper, are especially designed for those who are less advanced in religion; and can in their own case be properly and beneficially dispensed with. This suggestion comes with such an insinuating and plausible air, that some entirely devoted persons, not expecting danger in this direction, have in some degree yielded to it; have accounted the Sabbath on the same footing with other days, have neglected the public ministrations of the word, and have fallen for a time into other erroneous views and practices, to the dishonor of God, the discredit of religion, and the great injury of their own souls. Let it be our earnest and sincere prayer, that Satan may not in this way gain an advantage over us.

2. *Neglect of relative duties.*—Another danger to which those persons who profess and who possess holiness are peculiarly exposed, is the neglect of relative duties, such as we owe to our families, our friends, and those with whom we are connected in business; those, in a word, which flow out of the relations which we sustain as children, parents, neighbors, and citizens. Holy persons feel deeply the worth of souls; they weep over the spiritual woes of those who are perishing around them; they desire earnestly the salvation of their fellow-men. It is in this state of mind, which is so acceptable in the sight of God, that Satan, who knows how to adapt his temptations to the precise state of the tempted person, approaches in the garb of an angel of light, in order that he may the more surely lead them astray. He professes deeply to sympathize in their sorrow for the unconverted. With a most base insinuation he whispers in their ear, that it is a very hard thing for them, when the fields are already white to the harvest, to spend their days as shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, seamstresses, and household domestics. He takes them with apparent

kindness by the hand; he points out to them the desolations of Zion; he tells them to go forth into the by-ways and hedges; to lift up their voice like a trumpet and spare not. Under the influence of a temptation so peculiarly adapted to the elevated fervor of their religious feelings, it is not surprising that some throw down their instruments of labor, neglect the due support of their families, fail to fulfil their contracts with their fellow men, and thus, while they think they are doing God's service, pursue a course which obviously violates some of his plainest commands.

It is undoubtedly the general rule of God's administration, that he requires us to be holy in the precise situation in which he has seen fit to place us. If he should see fit to call us abroad to uncommon and extraordinary labors in the vineyard, we may well expect that he will make our duty clear by some marked and decisive indications in his providence; such indications as will satisfy others of our duty as well as ourselves. But the general rule is, as might be made abundantly clear from the scriptures, as well as from the reasonableness and nature of the case, that we must be content to live holily and unblamably just where God has seen fit to place us. There is need not only of holy preachers, but of holy farmers, merchants, mechanics, and domestics. Holiness is destined to pervade all the callings and relations of life. And some, at least, must be willing to live a holy life in what the world may perhaps call a very humble sphere. Nevertheless, they are as acceptable in the sight of God as others.

3. *A censorious spirit.*—Another danger to which persons professing holiness are exposed, is that of a censorious spirit. Being deeply taught by the Holy Spirit, that holiness is the object of all others the most dear to the heart of God, they justly esteem it the one thing needful,—the pearl of great price. Accordingly, it grieves them very much when they find so few of the professed followers of Christ in the possession of it; when they find but very few aiming at it as a distinct and attainable object; and in some cases discover the whole subject to be treated with a degree of skepticism and contempt, by those who do not hesitate to speak of themselves as redeemed by the blood of Christ. In this state of things they certainly have occasion to mourn over the condition of their fellow citizens; their grief is great; they feel that God is offended, that the blessed Saviour is dishonored, and that the Church is far from being that light of the world which it was designed to be. They feel that they must speak, and that they must rebuke the apathy and unbelief of those of whom better things might be reasonably expected. But, under the influence of the temptations of Satan, who perceives the weak point here as in other respects, they sometimes infuse into their remonstrances and rebukes, a spirit of severity and bitterness inconsistent with the great law of love. Thinking themselves to be doing God's service,—when in fact they are doing the work of Satan,—they may even go so far as to speak severely and disrespectfully of the ministry. On this painful topic the reader will find a statement in the Memoir of Miss H. S. Bunting, which will illustrate what we mean. After having listened to some remarks, which were probably of a censorious character, she says, "I fear a wrong spirit has crept in among this people. They speak too lightly of the ministry. Lord, save them from delusion and apostacy." Upon this passage of Miss Bunting's Memoir, the editor of the *Guide to Christian Perfection* very justly remarks, (vol. i. p. 77,) "It is pride and delusion, which leads to contempt of the authorized ministers of Christ; and here apostacy generally has its origin. This the history of the Church abundantly confirms."

4. *The doing of some great thing.*—Satan sometimes tempts holy persons to their destruction, by suggesting that, as they have been especially favored with gracious influences, they are called, and justly expected, to do some great thing, such as healing the sick, predicting future events, discerning of spiritual condition in others, or something else of a remarkable nature. He seems to have tempted the Saviour in this manner, when he proposed to him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. But although he supported the temptation by quoting a passage of scripture, which was well suited to the occasion, he was foiled in his impious attempt. Mr. Wesley, in his Journal, (Dec., 1762,) makes mention of a number of persons to whom these statements would well apply, and who gave him much trouble. Speaking of one of them on a certain occasion, he says, "George Bell prayed, in the whole, pretty near an hour. His fervor of spirit I could not but admire. I afterward told him what I did not admire, namely, 1. His *screaming*, every now and then, in so strange a manner, that one could scarce tell what he said; 2. His thinking he had the miraculous *discernment of spirit*; and 3. His sharply condemning his opposers." This individual seems to have been the person who predicted that the world would come to an end on the last day of February, 1763; a prediction which caused much excitement and trouble at the time, but had no fulfilment. Madame Guyon, of France, a woman distinguished alike for her talents and piety, and whose religious history has attracted considerable attention, fell into one of the errors which have been referred to under this head. She believed that she had the gift of *discerning spirits*; and that by the special favor of God, she could tell the religious state of other persons, even when they were absent, and when she was debarred from any direct intercourse with them.* Errors of this kind, it will be readily seen, must have a disastrous effect upon the cause of holiness. Is not that remarkable passage (Luke x, 17—20) applicable here? "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. *Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.*"

Intellectual gifts will not profit us, even miraculous gifts will not profit, unless we have the meek, humble, benevolent spirit of our Saviour. The approbation of God is given to our love, rather than our power. So that the weakest, the most inconsiderable disciple, if he loves much, shall have his reward. It is not necessary to do great things, much less is it necessary falsely to *pretend* to do great things, in order to be a real disciple of Christ.

5. *A tendency to division and separation has sometimes been noticed in the class of persons whom we have in view.*—The evil is great, but the tendency is a perfectly natural one. The heart of a holy person meets with but little response in this rebellious and sinful world. It is continually grieved with what it observes in the great mass of mankind, and very often with what it sees in those who bear the name of Christ. Depressed and overwhelmed with what it witnesses around it, it retires into itself; it weeps in solitary places; and seeks its communion and support in intercourse with God alone. There are some persons, perhaps, whom God

* See Mrs. Child's Life of Madame Guyon.

will hold in some degree excusable in taking this course. Such may be the weakness of their physical system, or such the intenseness of their natural sensibility, that there seems to be nothing left for them but to turn aside and to weep. They do not seem to have strength enough for the contest with the evils which surround them, and can only bring their desires and complaints and lay them at the feet of their heavenly Father.

But with such exceptions, which may sometimes exist, it would seem to be a correct doctrine, that all persons professing holiness, are required to do good by mingling with the world, by discharging their full share of duty as members of religious societies and churches, and in other public ways, as well as in retirement. They must learn to bear patiently not only with the infirmities, but in some sense even with the sins of others; and not account it a strange and grievous thing that they sometimes, and perhaps frequently, meet with opposition, rebuke, and persecution. They must be willing to endure much, and to endure it patiently and rejoicingly, in order to save souls. It is a sad sign when persons professing godliness give place to trials which must necessarily beset them, and yield to discouraging influences. "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. vi. 9.

This subject might be pursued to still greater length. But enough has, perhaps, been said for the present. The subject is, in some respects, and in some degree, a painful one. But the cause of holiness is one of such transcendent importance, that it is proper and necessary to consider it in all its bearings. Otherwise it may sometimes be injured by the instrumentality of its own best friends. The way of holiness is truly a strait and narrow way; and happy are they who find it and walk in it. Certain it is, if the Church is to be brought into a right state; if the power of the gospel is to be felt as it ought to be felt, in the hearts of impenitent sinners; if the name of Christ is to become a great and honored name on the earth, the doctrine of holiness in all its various respects,—in its principles, its encouragements, and its dangers,—must be understood and inculcated, and practised more generally than it has been.

T. C. U.

From the Oberlin Evangelist.

SHORT SERMON—THE TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.—2 Cor. xi. 14.

If so, then his influences may resemble those of the Holy Spirit of light, and how can we distinguish the one from the other? Every Christian reader will see that it must be to himself of infinite moment, that he should be able to make this distinction, that he should know the work of the Holy Spirit of God by its appropriate tests, or marks, so as never to be misled by Satan. For, be it never forgotten, this is a world of temptation, and influences to evil are abroad all over it,

and of every sort. Enough there are within us, and enough without us; some from the external world, and some of a spiritual kind from the devil and his angels. So, under both the Old and New Testament dispensation, there were false prophets, who taught false doctrines, and who seem to have been led by the great deceiver. But God then took special pains to hold up this fact in solemn warning, and reveal the tests by which the spirit of darkness might be known. So now the Spirit of truth leaves not himself without witness. Tests there are by which his genuine influences may be ascertained. *And what are they?*

I answer, Not *instinct*. This may be a safe law for the lower animals, but God never made it any law at all for things or beings of a moral character. Again, not *impressions*. The bare impression on my mind that this comes from the Spirit of God does not prove that it does. Satan may have told me that very thing. He is a liar of old. Nor, again, is the pleasurable emotion produced on my mind, of course proof that the influence which caused it is from God. When Satan becomes an angel of light, and touches some of the more refined springs of selfish joy, there may be a gushing flood of pleasant emotion. That soul might sing itself away—to perdition.

But there are substantial tests by which the Spirit's teachings may be known. I believe them to be mainly included under the following heads.

1. *The Spirit's teachings harmonize with God's word.* For both have the same Author. Both have the same object. The divine Spirit now comes to make more clear and effective on our minds the very truth revealed in the Bible. The great first principle ought to be thoroughly understood by every Christian. Then we shall see that the Bible is not only a book of instruction, but **THE** great book, comprising all divine revelation—the sum total of all divine truth which we are to know of God on this side of heaven. And in this view of the case, we have a great standard by which to try all spiritual influences of every sort. One question only is to be asked. *Do they correspond with the book which we have from God?* God's Spirit never teaches any thing in opposition to the revealed truth of the Bible. Satan does. Here is always a broad, an immensely wide difference. And, Christian reader, if you will search the Bible constantly, with great diligence, and much prayer for the Spirit's aid, so that your very soul shall drink in its real sentiments, and apprehend its genuine meaning, you need not be deceived by the father of lies.

This test admits of being universally and easily applied. Suppose that in extreme trial you are perplexed, disappointed, injured by bad men or by good men, and some impulse within says, "You do well to be angry, now fret; rebel, cut your enemy and make him smart for it. The cause of truth and justice demands it." But who is this

prompter? Is he from above or from beneath? I answer, By his fruits you may know him. Compare his doctrines with the Bible. When the Spirit of God recalls the right truth to your remembrance, does it say fret, rebel, retaliate, make your enemy pay dearly for the sin of having troubled you? Are these precepts extracted from the sacred pages? Are they found there along side of the doctrine "Love your enemies"—"Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil"—"Forbearing and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ did, so do ye"?

It is easy to see that this principle applies in the same manner to the Spirit's teaching in regard to *doctrinal truth*. Here, too, the Bible is the text. New pretended revelations which depart from the Bible are vain as the wind. If the reader will examine Deut. xiii. 1—5, and 1 John iv. 1—3, he will see this principle developed in both the Old and the New Testament dispensations. If a man taught idolatry in Israel, no matter how many miracles he wrought, and how much inspiration he claimed or seemed to have, the people must kill him without mercy, and hearken not to his lies. The discrepancy of his doctrine with God's known revealed truth, was enough to seal his doom against all possible testimony in his favor. So the Apostle John taught the Church not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they were of God, and gave this one great test: Do they confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? This cardinal doctrine of the primitive Church was the great touchstone. Let a man claim ever so much inspiration, and prove it ever so plausibly, if his doctrine is not the Bible, his spirit is anti-Christ.

2. *The effects of the Spirit's teaching correspond with the fruits of the Spirit as revealed in the Bible.*—Most fortunately the Bible has told us plainly what the fruits of the Spirit's work in the soul will always be. They are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Gal. v. 22. Hence all spiritual influences may be known by their fruits. What sort of an effect do they have on the mind? Do they breathe over it the soft gales of heaven? Do they wake up the glowings of universal love—love even to my enemy? Do they melt my spirit into sweet sympathy with the blest Spirit of Jesus? Then I have nothing to fear. I know that this is from the Spirit of God. The devil never made any man love his enemy. The devil never set himself to increase the amount of disinterested good will among mankind. He never made war against the selfishness of man's heart. Of course the devil's imitations of the Spirit may always be detected by their fruits. Do they cherish ill-will to man, or pride? Do they particularly gratify *myself*, by subserving my own selfish ends? Do they chime in with the demands of my lusts, and by much sophistry, and much distortion of the Bible, seem to prove from Holy Writ that I may rightly make a God

of my belly, or an idol of my reputation? Ah, such teachings bear the marks of their subtle, hellish authorship. He knows his strong hold. And you, Christian, ought not to be ignorant of his devices.

3. *The previous state of our own minds* may rightly aid us in distinguishing the works of the Spirit from all counterfeits. The principle on which this sentiment rests is no other than this: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?" "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Now if I have been waiting humbly on God, hungering for the Spirit, coming like a child and trusting in my Father for it, need I fear that he will send me a delusion, or suffer the devil to ensnare me? Will he give me a serpent? I trow not.

But if I have been in a selfish state of mind; cherishing a proud complacency in my own knowledge of religion, or in my talents; or if I have been listening to the demands of my sensual being, and am rather inviting some influence to defend me in their indulgence, then I may expect, not the Spirit of God, but the spirit of delusion. I am all naked, to the shafts of the devil. I have opened the door, and thrown away my armor, and the traitor within bids the foul spirit come on. No wonder now if he comes.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"Thou art my Shield."

Why, O, Christian, art thou dismayed at the sight of thy foes, that come up to war against thy soul? That invisible host is conquered by the Captain of thy salvation, and in his strength thou also art conqueror. Thou thyself art weak and defenceless, but He is thy defence. O *trust in Him*, and victory, victory, will be the inward triumph of thy soul. Possess thyself of Jesus, and thou art conqueror. What though the tempter variously and strongly assault thee, sometimes by open and broad attacks, and then again by some secret and subtle device, yet do thou always stand firm; still stand, even though thy soul be famished, and darkness settle around thee; stand to thy one purpose, of serving God and God only. Consider Jesus in the wilderness, and in the garden. O, what an hour was that, when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" But he still said, "My God, my God." Thus, O thou follower of Jesus, do thou cling to thy Lord and master. Still hold on, and all the powers

of darkness cannot shake thee off, cannot separate thy soul from oneness with him. Be resolved to conquer every foe in the strength of Jesus.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Isaiah saw in a vision, the Lord seated on a throne, and the flying seraphim around the throne, and heard their voices as they cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." Then said he, "Wo is me, I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips." Then with angel speed flew one of the seraphim, bearing a burning coal, and laid it on his mouth, saying, "Thine iniquity is purged." Now he talks with God, and is no more afraid. Said Moses, "I beseech thee shew me thy glory." And the Lord said, "While my glory passeth by, I will hide thee in the cleft of the rock." Now, by the blood of sprinkling, the way of communion with God is made plain. Now may the soul, hidden in Jesus, behold the glory of the Lord. The sacrifice is offered, and the blood of this sacrifice cleanseth from all sin. O thou who art bowed down with a load of sin, offer now thy soul for cleansing, for purifying. Apply in faith to God for the full merit of this sacrifice. Come, O come, and sit under the constant droppings of this blood; it not only cancels guilt, it takes it away. Thus, and thus only, by the removing of thy guilt, is the way open to see God; to converse with God, not as a guilty malefactor condemned to death, but as one reprieved; as one made alive from the dead. And let thy soul burst out and flow forth in a flame of love that shall ascend, and mix, and mingle with the love of the ransomed ones around the throne: yea, with the nature of thy God, for God is love. Love is heaven's own element. Each soul there breathes in and breathes out love.

Precious is thy name, O Jesus! In thy name I come to the Father, and am accepted. Coming in thy name and in thy righteousness, I look up, and am no more afraid. The holy, holy Lord of hosts can be approached, and his glory discerned, by the soul that fully casts itself on Jesus, not to be justified only, but to be washed, to be sanctified, to be made clean. Glory be to God for this salvation! Glory and praise, for ever and ever! Amen.

"I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

This, Christian disciple, is the beginning and the ending of thy lesson; to know Christ; to study Christ; whom to know aright is everlasting life begun in the soul. Study Christ, for this end and aim, that thou mayest be like him. It is thy high, thy blessed, thine exalted privilege, to be like Christ. Yes, to be like him, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sin. That blood which he shed, shall purge thy conscience from dead works to serve the living God; to serve him with a cheerful, a ready obedience. To do

thy Father's will may be thy *delight*, even as it was his. But in order to this, thou must know Jesus crucified, and conform to him, by a crucifixion of thy sinful, carnal nature. Self must be laid aside; self must be crucified; and "earth to earth" must be the motto for thy carnal nature. The heart, the soul, the mind, the strength, must say, "Lo, I come to do thy will," O my Father. Here, Christian, is the lesson, *to know Jesus, and Jesus crucified*. To feel thyself buried in the likeness of his death: this is the baptism unto death, *the death of sin*; this is the new life, the life in Christ. Hence the command, "Reckon thyself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." I charge thee, O my soul, thus to reckon, and reckon on and reckon on, until thou shalt be where temptation to sin can never reach thee. Thus reckon, by the moment, by a momentary faith, by a faith always in exercise, and it will be according to thy faith. Thy new life, thy spiritual life, is all in Christ, and all of faith; and thou must know Jesus crucified, before thou canst know Jesus risen, by a participation of the new life in him. Be it thy desire, O my soul, to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS, HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

I.

Think much and pray much; but let your words be few, and uttered with a holy courteousness, as in God's presence. And yet regard may be had to times and seasons. We may innocently act the child with children, which in the presence of grown persons would have the appearance of thoughtlessness and levity. And may perhaps at times express our gratitude to God and our holy joys, with an increased degree of freedom and vivacity, especially in the company of those who bear the same image, and who know what it is to rejoice in the Holy Ghost.

II.

Be silent when blamed and reproached unjustly, and under such circumstances that the reproachful and injurious person will be likely, under the influence of his own reflections, to discover his error and wrong speedily. In the name of your Redeemer, reply not; but receive the injurious treatment with humility and calmness; and He, in whose name you thus suffer, will reward you with inward consolation, while He sends the sharp arrow of conviction into the heart of your adversary.

III.

In whatever you are called upon to do, endeavor to maintain a calm, collected, ob of

and prayerful state of mind. Self-recollection is of great importance. "It is good for a man to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." He who is in what may be called a spiritual hurry, or rather who runs without having evidence of being spiritually sent, makes haste to no purpose.

IV.

Seek holiness rather than consolation. Not that consolation is to be despised, or thought lightly of; but solid and permanent consolation is the result rather than the forerunner of holiness; therefore he who seeks consolation as a distinct and independent object, will miss it. Seek and possess holiness, and consolation (not perhaps often in the form of ecstatic and rapturous joys, but rather of solid and delightful peace,) will follow, as assuredly as warmth follows the dispensation of the rays of the sun. He who is holy, must be happy.

V.

Be not disheartened because the eye of the world is constantly and earnestly fixed upon you, to detect your errors and to rejoice in your halting. But rather regard this state of things, trying as it may be, as one of the safeguards which a kind Father has placed around you, to keep alive in your own bosoms an antagonist spirit of watchfulness, and to prevent those very mistakes and transgressions which your enemies eagerly anticipate.

VI.

Do not think it strange, when troubles and persecutions come upon you. Rather receive them quietly and thankfully, as coming from a Father's hand. Yea, happy are ye if, in the exercise of faith, you can look above the earthly instrumentality, above the selfishness and malice of men, to Him who has permitted them for your good. Thus persecuted they the Saviour and the prophets.

VII.

"Be ye angry and sin not." The life of our Saviour, as well as the precepts of the apostles, clearly teaches us that there may be occasions on which we may have feelings of displeasure, and even of anger, without sin. Sin does not necessarily attach to anger, considered in its nature, but in its degree. Nevertheless, anger seldom exists in fact, without becoming in its measurement inordinate and excessive. Hence it is important to watch against it, lest we be led into transgression. Make it a rule, therefore, never to give any outward expression to angry feelings, (a course which will operate as a powerful check upon their excessive action,) until you have made them the subject of reflection and prayer. And thus you may hope to be kept.

VIII.

True peace of mind does not depend, as some seem to suppose, on the external incidents of riches and poverty, of health and sickness, of friendship and enmities. It has no necessary dependence upon society or seclusion; upon dwelling in cities or in the desert; upon the possession of temporal power, or a condition of temporal insignificance and weakness. "The kingdom of God is within you." Let the heart be right, let it be fully united with the will of God, and we shall be entirely contented with those circumstances in which Providence has seen fit to place us, however unpropitious they may be in a worldly point of view. He who gains the victory over himself, gains the victory over all his enemies.

IX.

Some persons think of obedience as if it were nothing else, and could be nothing else, than servitude. And it must be admitted, that *constrained* obedience is so. He who obeys by compulsion and not freely, wears a chain upon his spirit which continually frets and torments, while it confines him. But this is not Christian obedience. To obey with the whole heart, in other words to obey as Christ would have us, is essentially the same as to be perfectly resigned to the will of God; having no will but His. And he must have strange notions of the interior and purified life, who supposes that the obedience which revolves constantly and joyfully within the limits of the Divine Will, partakes of the nature of servitude. On the contrary, true obedience, that which has its seat in the affections, and which flows out like the gushing of water, may be said, in a very important sense, to possess not only the nature, but the very essence of freedom.

X.

A sanctified state of heart does not require to be sustained by any mere forms of bodily excitation. It gets above the dominion, at least in a very considerable degree, of the nerves and the senses. It seeks an atmosphere of calmness, of thought, and holy meditation.

XI.

Our spiritual strength will be nearly in proportion to the absence of self-dependence and self-confidence. When we are weak in ourselves, we shall not fail, if we apply to the right source for help, to be found strong in the Lord. Madame Guyon, speaking of certain temptations to which she had been exposed, says, "I then comprehended what power a soul has, which is entirely annihilated." This is strong language; but when it is properly understood, it conveys important truth. When we sink in ourselves, we rise in God. When we have no strength in ourselves, we have divine power in Him who can subdue all his adversaries. "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

XII.

In proportion as the heart becomes sanctified, there is a diminished tendency to enthusiasm and fanaticism. And this is undoubtedly one of the leading tests of sanctification. One of the marks of an enthusiastic and fanatical state of mind, is a fiery and unrestrained impetuosity of feeling; a rushing on, sometimes very blindly, as if the world were in danger, or as if the great Creator were not at the helm. It is not only feeling without a due degree of judgment, but, what is the corrupting and fatal trait, it is feeling without a due degree of confidence in God. True holiness reflects the image of God in this respect as well as in others, that it is calm, thoughtful, deliberate, immutable. And how can it be otherwise, since, rejecting its own wisdom and strength, it incorporates into itself the wisdom and strength of the Almighty.

XIII.

The hidden life, which God imparts to his accepted people, may flourish in solitudes and deserts; far from the societies of men and the din and disturbance of cities. From the cave of the hermit, from the cell of the solitary recluse, the fervent prayer has often arisen, which has been acceptable in the sight of God. But

it would be a strange and fatal misconception, that religion, even in its most pure and triumphant exaltations, can flourish no where else. The home of holiness is in the heart, irrespective of outward situations and alliances; and therefore we may expect to find it, if there are hearts adapted to its reception and growth, in the haunts of business as well as in the silence of retirement; in the palaces of Rome as well as in the deserts of the Thebais. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that we cannot be holy except on the condition of a situation and circumstances in life such as shall suit ourselves. It is one of the first principles of holiness to leave our times and our places, our going out and our coming in, our wasted and our goodly heritage, entirely with the Lord. Here, O Lord, hast thou placed us, and we will glorify thee here.

XIV.

In the agitations of the present life, beset and perplexed as we are with troubles, how natural it is to seek earnestly some place of rest. And hence it is that we so often reveal our cares and perplexities to our fellow men, and seek comfort and support from that source. But the sanctified soul, having experienced the uncertainties of all human aids, turns instinctively to the great God. And hiding itself in the presence and protection of the divine existence, it reposes there, as in a strong tower which no enemies can conquer, and as an everlasting rock which no floods can wash away. It knows the instructive import of that sublime exclamation of the Psalmist, (Ps. lxi. 5,) "My soul, wait thou ONLY upon God; for my expectation is from him."

XV.

Speak not often of your own actions, nor even (when it can be properly avoided) make allusion to yourself, as an agent in transactions which are calculated to attract notice. We do not suppose, as some may be inclined to do, that frequent speaking of our actions is necessarily a proof, although it may furnish a presumption, of inordinate self-love or vanity; but it cannot be denied that by such a course, we expose ourselves to temptations and dangers in that direction. It is much safer, and is certainly much more profitable, to speak of what has been done for us and wrought in us—to speak, for instance, of ourselves as the recipients of the goodness of God, than to speak of what we have ourselves done. But even here, also, although it may often be an imperative duty, there is need of deliberation and caution.

T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PERFECT CHRISTIAN.

"Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." This is the language of the Psalmist. It asserts the existence of a perfect man in this world. *Mark him!* By a perfect man, we understand a perfect Christian. By a perfect Christian, is meant one saved from all sin, and whose heart is filled with the love

of God. Hence our Saviour says, Matth. v. 48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And also in James i. 16, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." God is perfect; a *pattern of perfection* to all his people. There can be no sin in his infinite nature—nothing but purity, goodness, and love. So we are commanded to be free from sin, and to be filled with the Divine Spirit; and to show the truth of this the apostle says, Rom. viii. 2, "And the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of *sin* and *death*." To be a perfect Christian, then, is nothing more than to be saved from all sin, and to love God with all the heart, soul, might and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. Therefore to be a perfect Christian, does not mean that in every sense we must be as perfect as God, as angels, or as Adam was before the fall. God is perfect in a sense in which no other being can be. Angels have a perfection peculiar to themselves. They are perfect angels. Adam had a perfection peculiar to his state as a sinless being. When he fell he not only became polluted by sin, but he lost his bodily immortality, and all the powers of his soul became greatly debilitated. From this state of debilitation he cannot be restored in this world. Therefore, when we speak of a perfect Christian, we do not mean one that is as perfect as God, as angels, or as Adam was in his state of innocency, but we simply mean one who is free from all sin—as free as God, angels, or Adam before his apostacy—and one whose heart is filled with love to God and man.

Neither are we to suppose that a perfect Christian is free from all the evils and infirmities of life. These in a greater or less degree will follow him through this "vale of tears." He will always possess a body subject to disease and pain, and which must sooner or later go into the grave. He will always be liable to err in judgment, and this may lead to unintentional errors in practice. But these errors and infirmities are not sins. They are inseparable with man's fallen state; and unless they spring from disobedience to the will of God, may be considered innocent, and for which he is not held responsible. Therefore, since we claim not Adamic perfection for man in his present state, he may be subject to many of the evils and infirmities of life which are the necessary results of the fall, and from which God never designed to restore man fully in this world, and still be a perfect Christian; that is, saved from all sin and filled with the Divine Spirit. He who expects Adamic or angelic perfection, in every respect, from man in his present state, has widely mistaken the subject, and stands in great need of being instructed from the scriptures of truth. And he stands equally in need of being thus instructed, who supposes that because man cannot be saved from all the infirmities of his nature in this world, he must necessarily live in sin, and perpetually transgress the law of God. Such a sentiment is most preposterous; and it is

unaccountably strange that it should ever be advanced and defended by professing Christians. This, however, may be accounted for, when we consider how strangely warped and blinded men will become by prejudice, or by strong attachment to long cherished opinions. But this chain of deception and absurdity is broken.

Truth is rapidly spreading, and must ultimately triumph. Not only does one of the largest Christian denominations in the land subscribe to the doctrine that the "*blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin*," but some of the mightiest intellects of the nation, connected with other branches of the Christian church, are nobly employed in its advocacy and defence. Blessed be God, the day cannot be far distant when there shall be hundreds and thousands of perfect Christians raised up where there is one now, to testify to the great things God has done for their souls, who shall be epistles read and known of all men! Lord hasten the day when scriptural holiness shall be enstamped on the hearts, and its principles developed in the lives, of all men. More on this subject hereafter.

R. W. A.

Eastford, Conn., Aug. 25.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

DEAR BRETHREN,—I am yielding to an impression that has followed me ever since I read the first number of the Guide—to tell what God has done for my soul. But the suggestion that it would be too great a tax upon your time and patience, and would fail of obtaining a place in the Guide, has prevented my undertaking it until the present time. Any disposition your judgment may lead you to make of this communication, will be satisfactory to my mind.

In March, 1805, at the age of 12 years, I sought the Lord and found peace in believing, and joined the church under the ministry of Rev. Samuel Draper. With me it was believing and doubting for a long time. I dared not say I knew my sins were forgiven. One day, on reflection, I saw that after prayer my mind was clearer, and I was half inclined to say that my soul was converted to God. But soon I reasoned my evidence all away, and felt as before. This was the way I went on for about eight years, when the Spirit came to my rescue, and convinced me that the good feelings I obtained in secret prayer, if kept by watchfulness until another season of prayer, then the blessing would not be the bringing up of arrearages, but the adding of grace to grace, until it would be like a river. I resolved on the spot that this should be my future course. I now began in good earnest. The more I watched and prayed, the greater was my peace and fervor, until my whole soul and body were every moment engaged. What I gained I kept, and that was an addition, till one morning while at prayer for an undoubted evidence that I was a child

of God, I was so blessed and lost in wonder, love, and praise, that I could proceed no farther in prayer, but praised God with all my heart. I cried Glory at every breath. My soul was full of glory and of God. Every doubt, yea, shadow of a doubt, was removed. It appeared to me that I never knew any thing so certain, whether visible or invisible, as I did that I was a Christian. I arose, and said with an audible voice, I would sooner think myself asleep, and all this a dream, than doubt that my heart is right with God—just right. Blessed be God, how sweet to reflect on the grace that swept away every thing clean on this occasion! Christ was my companion, and I could sing,

"I find him in singing, I find him in prayer,
In blest meditation, he always is there."

For some time after this, I felt that Christ loved me; had great nearness to God; no want of confidence in him; had not pleasure in earth as before; my all was laid up above. I desired little conversation with any; and if courtesy or business led me to converse, very soon I was glad to withdraw and hold conversation with God. It seemed that my heart was alive to the most pleasant and happy feelings. All this time it never entered my heart that this was perfect love, as at this time there was little said or done on this subject, and of course my knowledge of it was very deficient. But alas! I soon lost this rapturous height, though I never afterwards doubted that God had forgiven my sins.

After this, I lived as most professors do, repenting and sinning, up and down in my feelings, for twenty-one years. Being better informed on the subject of holiness, I sometimes felt called of God to seek it. Once I made quite an effort, and appointed special prayer meetings; but being opposed I gave them up, and continued on in the usual course until May, 1834, when I covenanted with our preacher, H. R. Colman, to pray for holiness; though not feeling more conviction for the blessing than many times previous, or as I sometimes thought afterwards, not knowing what I did. But as I made effort, and set myself apart for the work, I soon felt and did more. To commit myself, I spake of my intentions and resolutions in public and private, and invited others to join me and draw near to God. One morning it appeared to me that I should seek it as I told others to seek justification—to make no half-hearted effort. The Spirit enforced these things with power upon my heart. But as I had formerly acted on such weak resolutions, and broken so many promises, I had little confidence in myself. In this condition I wept, but felt afraid to form a resolution to end with time, or give the subject up altogether. My distressed soul cried out, Lord, what shall I do? If I say for life, I shall do as before; if I give it up, and live as formerly,

"It is worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone."

It appeared to me that the Spirit replied, *Vow* unto the Lord, you need not break it; my grace is sufficient for you; there is nothing to hinder your living as faithful as Elijah or the apostles. What advantage had they that you have not? Do as you will, give it up or vow, perfect love is not obtained but by doing all on your part. I felt the force of this reasoning, and saw that "through Christ strengthening me I could do all things." With streaming eyes and a broken heart, I knelt down, as before the Lord, saying, O Lord God, for Christ's sake help me to make this promise and keep it for ever. I depend on thee. I shall surely fail without thee. And

I added, I now reckon myself dead to the world, and promise to seek holiness until death, or find it before. I will live as the holy do; I will walk with God hereafter at all times. I went into my house and wrote it down; and if I had then believed, I should have found the prize. Heretofore I had felt the want of conviction, but not afterwards. Conviction rose higher and higher, and I felt my wretched condition without this "pearl of great price." Blessed be God, about this time I obtained the Christian Manual, the very book I needed, as it suited my inquiring condition. I soon resolved to follow all its directions, and as I saw it agreed with the wants of my soul, I would not allow myself to read but little at a time, then struggle to do as directed. At first I prayed to be willing to be sanctified, and *now* was willing, and realized the gain. I then began to look, expect, and believe for the blessing, and thought I gave up all.

About this time a camp meeting was to be held in Charlotte, Vt., and I resolved on losing no time nor relax in my efforts because I was going. I prayed to God, and expected to receive before I arrived at the spot. I often said, Here I am, Lord, unoccupied, and will remain so, unless thou wilt occupy me. Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. I will do any duty and every duty, at any and every place. I yield all, *all to thee*. I well recollect telling the Lord that if I knew my heart was not all given up, I would not rest; he should have the whole; and when I thought I shall destroy myself at this rate, (for the struggle was hard,) the reply was, I will sink into the grave or into God; for I did not wish any longer to carry about an un-sanctified heart. On the road to the camp meeting, when we descended a hill, my prayer was, So let me descend to the feet of Christ; and when ascending, So let me arise to the height of PERFECT LOVE.

When near the camp ground I prayed, Let my soul be blest before I see it; and when I saw it, O let it fall upon me before I arrive there; and on our arrival, Now satisfy my soul before we pitch our tent; and as soon as it was erected, I fell down on my knees, and soon this text came to me, "Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and be ready the third day, for the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people," &c. I soon felt that all was on the altar, myself not excepted. The second day of the meeting, while urging my request to God, it was suggested to my mind whether I would not be willing to wait a day or two if it would be better for me to all eternity? My heart said, yes; but give me an evidence that I have done all.

The 5th of June, that never to be forgotten day, I went out to hear Mr. Bates preach from these words: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly," &c. For want of room I can only say, that never was a sermon so blest to my ears and heart as this was. I went to the tent and reflected whether it would be better for me to wait or not, but felt I could not wait longer. My pen can never describe the deep anguish of my heart. The unutterable, vehement desires of my soul were raised to the highest pitch. I fell upon my knees crying, O Lord, relieve my heart of this burden. A sudden, sensible feeling shocked the body, and blessed the soul with a calm, soothing, pleasant, heavenly sensation. My prayers were all answered, and my soul satisfied to that extent that I had no desire to continue praying, and closed as soon as I conveniently could; then clapping my hands, and moderately repeating, Glory, glory, glory, in a low tone of voice, I soon sunk down into a profound silence, "and there was a great calm." O what weakness, sincerity, honesty, and humility! and what nearness to God—what power to believe and lean upon him, I

then felt! The trumpet blew, and I arose and went to preaching, hoping it was the blessing. I sat down, and felt best in closing my eyes, for I was lost in God—only Jesus I desired to know or see. I soon felt a happy thrill that would make me start as though one had pricked me with a needle, which was repeated again and again, until I thought What shall I do? I concluded I would bless the Lord for what I had received; I did so, and soon felt as happy as I could be in the body. The meeting closed, and I felt in haste to tell some one that I was blest. The first person I met was our preacher, then my wife, who desired to know if I had obtained the blessing. I replied, My soul is happy. She repeated the same question, and I the same answer, not choosing to say I had or had not obtained it. I was full of glory. The long contracted habit of doubting, which cost me this hard struggle, now came to an end. I now was a fool for Christ's sake; my knowledge ceased; I saw my ignorance, and desired instruction. I felt my weakness, and concluded I had nearly lived in vain, and now must walk in a way I knew not. This was contrary to my expectation; for I had said, Sanctify me, and I shall be strong, see clearly, and measurably know as I am known. The meeting drew to a close; and now to think of returning home where there were none to tell me by experience how to live and retain this blessing, was painful to me. I wept bitterly, but resolved to live up to conviction and do as well as I knew how. I did so, and prospered beyond all my expectations; but to God be all the glory.

As you read the above, offer one prayer to God that I may endure to the end, and you shall be remembered by your unworthy brother, that He would protect your life, and finally give editors, readers, and the subscriber, a seat in heaven among the sanctified.

MILO STOW.

Weybridge, Vt., August 18, 1840.

REVIVAL OF HOLINESS.

One interesting feature of the Camp Meetings at Eastham and Oxford was the special attention paid to the subject of Christian Perfection. It was a favorite theme in the tents and in the public congregation. We had sermons and addresses on the subject, and ardent pantings after holiness. At each place there was one public meeting devoted especially to that cause. They were exceedingly interesting occasions. The Lord was with us in very deed. The greater part of the brethren renewed their covenant with God, dedicating soul and spirit and body to his entire service and control, in expectation that he would sanctify them wholly, and preserve them blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

More than one hundred, at the two meetings, professed the blessing of perfect love. The Lord's name be praised. May they watch unto prayer, and so let their light shine that the world will not reproach us, saying, "Who has this love?"

Among the partakers of this glorious grace, were not only members of the Methodist, but of the Congregational and Baptist Churches. Being thus blessed how they loved each other. Selfishness was dead; names a mere convenience; love moved them, and to that every thing else did yield. O, what a tie! what a bond of union is this love!

We will add to the praise of divine grace that we have it in our own soul; we have been profited by the meetings. We have renewed our dedication to the Lord; we have gained new accessions at the throne of grace; our peace is as a river;—"All is well."

This we should speak from the depths of humility, giving God all the glory.

K.

OUTLINES OF A SERMON,—BY MR. FLETCHER.

The following may be *studied* with advantage and delight. It opens a wide field for meditation.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i, 30.

INTRODUCTION.—Know thyself and thy advantages, believer!

I. "Ye are of him."

Accepted, born, sons, heirs.

II. "In Christ Jesus."

The second Adam, to whom you are united by faith and love. On his part, by water, blood, and the Spirit. He made himself man.

REFLECTION.—How noble the Christian! How should he despise earth and sin! Believe in Christ, walk in Christ, and you will be God's. Wicked men are of the devil, in Adam.

III. "Christ is made of God."

Christ is the masterpiece of Divine wisdom, power, love, mercy, justice.

IV. "To us."

Enemies, foolish, guilty, polluted, wretched as long as we are out of Christ. Who sees it?

V. Christ is our Magazine.—All fulness. Wisdom, brightness, righteousness. He did and suffered all for us.

Priest.—Sanctification. Holy in himself. Making us so by faith as physician.

Redemption.—He redeemed himself and us, in rising from the dead. As King and Saviour he redeemed us from sin, misery, death.

☞ Christ not only offered, designed, but *made*.

APPLICATION.—Close with the bargain. Reject, neglect not Christ. Benighted, wandering ones, foolish slaves of sin, receive Christ as wisdom. Guilty ones, receive him as righteousness. Unclean ones, receive him as sanctification. Miserable ones, receive him as redemption.

Observe the order.—Justification is before sanctification. A chain with four links, one draws the other. Believers, what a treasure! draw, buy out.

☞ DISCONTINUANCES.

It is a painful duty for us to make remarks reflecting upon the Christian character of any of our readers; but circumstances require it.

We published on the cover of the Guide for the last three months of Vol. 1., that all who wished to discontinue should inform us before the commencement of Vol. 2. To signify such intention is according to both the custom and law of the land. But, notwithstanding this notice, and the facilities for discontinuing, for it can be done through any Agent or Post Master, we are requested to discontinue the Guide to some of our subscribers, even now, after two numbers of Vol. 2. have been sent them. In view of all the facts, is this reasonable? Is it just? Is it keeping the civil or the moral law? Is it doing as they would that others should do unto them? We think not. And we grant such requests only for peace sake, for we might lawfully continue to send the Guide and collect our pay for another year.

We have not made the above remarks so much to expose the fault of those who have committed this error, as to *warn* others.

Let all our readers, who are not well informed on this subject, reflect,—Is it my duty to keep the civil law? How shall I fulfill the Golden Rule? Have I a right to waste the property of another by leaving it in the Post Office, to be sold for postage, or thrown among the rubbish, or even sent back to the publisher defaced?

We think a few considerations of this kind will remedy the evil with our subscribers, for we charitably hope that what we complain of is an error of the head and not of the heart. Brethren, if we would be perfect, we must observe the law of justice and love in the smaller things, while the weightier matters are not neglected.

GUIDE

T O

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

OCTOBER, 1840.

NO. 4.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS, HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

XVI.

There are many persons who would willingly be Christians, and eminent Christians too, if Christianity were limited to great occasions. For such occasions they call forth whatever pious and devotional resources they have, or seem to have, and not only place them in the best light, but inspire them, for the time being, with the greatest possible efficiency. But on smaller occasions, in the every-day occurrences and events of life, the religious principle is in a state of dormancy; giving no signs of effective vitality and movement. The life of such persons is not like that of the sun, equable, constant, diffusive, and beneficent, though attracting but little notice; but like the eruptive and glaring blaze of volcanoes, which comes forth at remote periods, in company with great thunderings and shakings of the earth; and yet the heart of the people is not made glad by it. Such religion is vain; and its possessors know not what manner of spirit they are of.

XVII.

Out of death springs life. We must die naturally, in order that we may live spiritually. The beautiful flowers spring up from dead seeds; and from the death of those evil principles that spread so diffusively and darkly over the natural heart, springs up the beauty of a new life, the quiet but ravishing bloom of Holiness.

XVIII.

A strong faith has the power to make a virtual and present reality of those things which are in fact future. Be it so that we have not the thing itself in the literal sense of the term; that we have not heaven; that we have not the visible presence of Christ; that we have not those things, whatsoever they may be, which constitute the glory and blessedness of the future world. But it is certain that in the Bible we have the promise of them,—we have the title-deed, the bond, the mortgage, most solemnly made out and delivered to us. All these things are, therefore, ours,

if we fully believe in the promise; and they can all be made, in the exercise of entire faith, a virtual and present reality. A man reckons his notes, bonds, and bills, which are the certificates and confirmations of absent possessions, as so much property, as actual money, although it is only virtually and by faith realized to be such. He counts himself as truly and really owning the property, in amount and kind, which the face of his papers, of his notes and bonds, represents. And yet he has nothing in hand but his papers and his faith in the individuals who have signed them. How much more then should we have faith in *our* title-deeds, in *our* bonds and testaments, which are written in the blood of the Son of God, are confirmed by the oath of the Father, and are witnessed by the Holy Ghost! And how much more should we, having such deeds and bonds, and such immutable confirmations of them, count God ours, and Christ and the Holy Spirit ours, and eternal glory ours!

XIX.

It is an excellent saying of the celebrated Fenelon, "It is only imperfection that complains of what is imperfect." It would be well for those who aim at Christian perfection to remember this. Surrounded by those who constantly exhibit defects of character and conduct, if we yield to a complaining and impatient spirit, we shall mar our own peace, without having the satisfaction of benefitting others. When the mind is in a right position, absorbed in God and truly dead to the world, it will not be troubled by these things. Or if it be otherwise, and we are in fact afflicted, it will be for others and not for ourselves; and we shall be more disposed to pity than to complain.

XX.

Prayer without faith is vain. A pious English writer, one who lived as far back as the days of the Puritans, and who uses various homely but instructive illustrations after the manner of those times, calls prayer "the bucket of the soul, by which it draws water out of the wells of salvation. But without Faith, you may let down this bucket again and again, and never bring up one drop of solid comfort."* It is Faith, which fills the bucket. And accordingly, if our faith be weak, we shall find but poor and fainting returns. A full bucket depends on the condition of a strong faith.

XXI.

One of the most important requisites of a holy life is PATIENCE. And by this, we do not mean merely a meek and quiet temper, when one is personally assaulted and injured; but a like meekness and quietness of temper in relation to the moral and religious progress of the world. We may be deeply afflicted in view of the desolations of Zion; but let us ever remember and rejoice, that the cause of truth and holiness is lodged safely in the hands of God. With Him a thousand years are as one day. And in the darkest moments, when Satan seems to be let loose with ten-fold fury, let us thank God and take courage, because the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

XXII.

It may sometimes be practically important to make a distinction between a renunciation of the world and a renunciation of ourselves. A man may, in a certain sense and to a certain extent, renounce the world, and yet may find himself greatly disappointed in his anticipations of spiritual improvement and benefit. He has in-

* Symond's Light and Faith, printed in 1651.

deed renounced the world as it presents itself to us in its externalities; he has renounced its outward attractions; its perverted and idle shows. He may have carried his renouncement so far as to seclude himself entirely from society, and to spend his days in some solitary desert. But it avails nothing, or almost nothing, because there is not at the same time an internal renunciation; a crucifixion and renunciation of self. A mere crucifixion of the outward world may still leave a vitality and luxuriance of the selfish principle; but a crucifixion of self necessarily involves the crucifixion, in the Scripture sense, of every thing else.

XXIII.

It is one among the pious and valuable maxims, which are ascribed to Francis de Sales; "A judicious silence is always better than truth spoken without charity." The very undertaking to instruct or censure others, implies an assumption of intellectual or moral superiority. It cannot be expected, therefore, that the attempt will be well received, unless it is tempered with a heavenly spirit. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not *CHARITY*, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

XXIV.

We may be deprived of outward consolations; and still have consolations of heart. But this is not all. We may be deprived in the sovereignty of God and for wise purposes, of *inward* consolations also; and may be left for a time in a state of mental barrenness and desolation. And yet faith, precious faith, discouraging as this state of things may seem, may still remain; and not feebly merely, but in the strength and fulness of its exercise. It is still our delightful privilege to say of God, that He is *our* God, *our* Father, *our* Friend and Portion. "Blessed is the man, that *trusteth* in the Lord."

XXV.

No man ever arrived at Christian perfection, no man ever *can* arrive at that ennobling state, who walks by sight rather than by faith, and of whom it cannot be said, as of the father of the faithful, "he went out, *not knowing whither he went*." Perhaps we may say, it is the highest attainment of the soul, (certainly it is the foundation of the highest or perfect state in all other Christian attainments,) that of entire and unwavering confidence in God. O, God, we are thine; for ever thine. We will not let Thee go, until Thou bless us. And when Thou dost bless us, still we will not let Thee go. For without Thee, even blessing would be turned into cursing. Therefore will we ever trust in Thee.

XXVI.

Always make it a rule to do every thing, which it is proper and a duty to do, in the best manner and to the best of your ability. An imperfect execution of a thing, where we might have done better, is not only unprofitable, but it is a *vicious* execution; or in other words is morally wrong. He, who aims at perfection in great things, but is willing to be imperfect in little things, will find himself essentially an imperfect man. The perfection of the greater will be no compensation, and no excuse for the imperfection of the less. Such a person wants the essential principle of universal obedience. Consider well, therefore, what God in his Providence would have you perform—and if you feel the spirit of those directions which require us to do all things as unto God rather than unto men, you will not do them with a false heart or with a feeble hand. And thus in small things, as well as in

great, in those which are unseen as well as in those which attract notice, it shall be said of you, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

XXVII.

A fixed, inflexible will is a great assistance in a holy life. Satan will suggest a thousand reasons, why we should yield a little to the temptations by which we are surrounded; but let us ever stand fast in our purpose. A good degree of decision and tenacity of purpose is of great importance in the ordinary affairs of life. How much more so in the things of religion! He, who is easily shaken, will find the way of holiness difficult—perhaps impracticable. A double-minded man, he, who has no fixedness of purpose, no energy of will, is "unstable in all his ways." Ye, who walk in the narrow way, let your resolution be unalterable. Think of the blessed Saviour. "My God, my God, why hast *Thou* forsaken me?" Though he was momentarily forsaken, at least so far as to be left to anguish inconceivable and unutterable, his heart nevertheless was fixed, and he could still say, "*My God, my God.*"

XXVIII.

We may pray with the intellect, without praying with the heart; but we cannot pray with the heart, without praying with the intellect. Such are the laws of the mind, that there can be no such thing as praying without a knowledge of the thing we pray for. Let the heart be full, wholly given up to the pursuit of the object; but let your perception of the object be distinct and clear. This will be found honorable to God and beneficial to the soul.

XXIX.

Many persons think they are seeking holiness, when they are in fact seeking the "loaves and fishes." To be holy is to be like Christ, who, as the Captain of our salvation was made perfect *through suffering*. We must be willing to bear the Cross, if we would wear the crown. In seeking holiness, therefore, let us think little of joy, but much of purity; little of ourselves but much of God; little of our own wills, but much of the Divine will. We will choose the deepest poverty and affliction with the will of God, rather than all earthly goods and prosperities without it. It is God we seek, and not happiness. If we have God, He will not fail to take care of us. If we abide in Him, even a residence in hell could not harm us. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

TRIALS IN EXPERIENCE.

BROTHER MERRITT,—In giving an account, in the August number of the Guide, of my experience in the "narrow way," I briefly spoke of certain errors; thinking some one might be benefitted by the mention of them. Some of those errors I will now more particularly refer to; for, once, twice, and thrice, I have found myself pursuing a

course, which, if long followed, though in deep sincerity, would have proved, in the result, fatal to my object. At one time, less than one year after my entering a state of perfect faith and love, my feelings were deeply excited in view of the destruction awaiting the thoughtless, soul-neglecting multitude; so that it was a subject of wonder that I had previously felt their case no more. Accordingly, upon this point I fastened my mind, renewing and repeating my petition to my heavenly Father,—to bestow upon me as deep a sense of their state as I could bear and live; in order that my spirit might be so exercised in behalf of souls exposed to everlasting destruction, as henceforth to feel unutterable promptings to labor unceasingly for their rescue. In this strain I continued to supplicate; grasping, as it were, infinity of feeling upon this point; not once thinking of the possibility of not being approbated by Him who knew my object was, to be prepared to labor for the greatest good of the greatest number of my kindred travellers. O! for a deep and close view of the awful “end of the wicked,” to be constantly before me, was the cry of my heart. My Father, who doeth all things in wisdom, and maketh even our very errors lead to wisdom, if the heart be wholly consecrated to Him, took me at my word; my spirit trembled at the view which He gave me; my heart quaked. My soul, deeply oppressed, got utterance only in bewailings and lamentings. Language I could not use. In society I could do nothing, for presence of mind had nearly gone; and in retirement, nothing was accomplished. Days passed. The brain became feverish; the nerves tremulous; the whole system prostrated. Yet so absorbed, and utterly absorbed was my mind in the view which had been presented to me, that I thought not of the *cause* of this physical debility, and mental confusion, until after receiving the instructions and admonitions of a Christian friend. At that moment my eyes were opened, and I saw something of the import of my ill-judged prayer.—Astonished, deeply humbled, I now must look up for the blood of sprinkling, that the error be laid not to my charge; henceforth, saying, give *as Thou wilt*;—as much, or as little, of this or that sensation; for I have *no wisdom* to come to Thee with.—Amen!

Notwithstanding, in this case, I had forgotten my residence in a house of clay, and was brought to remember it, by learning that I had asked a degree of feeling which would unfit instead of preparing me for the work so desirable, I again proved my liability to fall into other errors of a similar kind. While yet in the first year of my experience in the deeper things of God, I was impressed that I had not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost as mortal might receive; as others *had* received. So, for this, particularly, I set my heart; that I might be better prepared to labor with power and effect. Night and day, at morn, and the midnight hour, I plead for this: until my

petition for it took the place of all those which I was accustomed to offer in behalf of others. I hardly need say here, that in this case I lacked discernment; not thinking I had, perhaps, already as much as I could bear.—For some time, my pining spirit sighed for that it did not understand, or whose effects entire, it had no conception of; until its zeal for this, obscured the blessings already possessed,—a sense of purity and peace. Here, I saw, nay, *felt*, the strugglings in which I once verged to despair; and now, by this intimation, I saw myself stepping upon critical ground. Ignorance! Blindness! were my appropriate exclamations. Lord Jesus! what, and how much shall I ask? The holy Sabbath came. My morning and retired exercises were indescribable. During church service, nothing touched my case: no light shone upon that point, until, when at the library with my Sabbath Scholars, an angel of mercy came for my strengthening—my rescue.—Its form, was “Fletcher on Christian Perfection.” The most emphatic words which I heard at that time, I will quote. (He spoke as if one with us, at the time,) “Do not confound Angelical with Christian Perfection. Uninterrupted transports of praise, and ceaseless raptures of joy, do not belong to Christian, but to angelical perfection. Our feeble frame can bear but a few drops of that glorious cup. In general, that new wine is too strong for our old bottles; that power is too excellent for our earthen, cracked vessels; but weak as they are, they can bear a fulness of meekness, of resignation, of humility, and of that love which is willing to obey unto death. If God indulges you with ecstasies, and extraordinary revelations, be thankful for them; but be not exalted above measure by them; take care, lest enthusiastic delusions mix themselves with them; and remember that your Christian perfection, does not so much consist in building a tabernacle upon Mount Tabor, and enjoying rare sights there, as in resolutely taking up the cross, and following Christ to the palace of a proud Caiaphas,—to the judgment-hall of an unjust Pilate, and to the top of an ignominious Calvary. You never read in your Bible, Let that glory be upon you which was also upon St. Stephen, when he looked stedfastly into heaven and said, ‘Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.’ But you have frequently read there, ‘Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.’”—At this, my waiting spirit cried, Amen! and since, and delight ever to be found

September, 1840.

A STUDENT.

EXTRACT.

Our readers will find the following extract of a letter from a Lady to a sister in Christ very interesting. It is truly refreshing to read the account of the experience of those who have entered into a state of perfect love. We do not discover any want of close connection in what we here publish, but if others discover it, an apology may be found in the fact that this communication is made up of several detached parts of a long letter.

May 18, 1840.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,—I address you on a subject that lies next my heart, viz: "*Christian holiness.*" It is now about four months since I discovered the path, that hath been to my soul "*as life from the dead.*" I was brought into the vineyard of the Lord at the eleventh hour, and felt the most strong and irresistible desire to devote the remainder of my life to the glory of God, and to have my heart and life conformed to the requirements of his *holy word*, which I endeavored to make my principal study. My desire for personal holiness was so intense, that very often sleep has departed from my eyes; and I can now look back to several periods, when I think that it would have been easy to have made an entire consecration to the blessed Saviour had not my mind been blinded by the ruinous creed of the church; for when I first felt the risings of the indwelling corruptions of my heart, after I had found peace in believing, I was thrown into a state little short of despair, but was told by experienced Christians, that this view of my deeply diseased self, "was one of the brightest evidences of conversion—that it was light that discovered darkness," &c. Thus instructed, I endeavored to move onward, but was in reality fast-bound in the chains of "legal bondage." I was aroused from a spiritual lethargy of very unusual stupidity, by the providential preservation of a beloved, but impenitent child, from a sudden and awful death. My desire for personal holiness now revived in all its former intensity, but a dark and gloomy cloud hung over the path, and it has often appeared to me that it would have been easier to have broken my limbs, than my chains. In this state of hopeless bondage I continued, till God in his providence, (for ever blessed be his name,) directed the steps of the Rev. Mr. T——, late of G——, to labor a few weeks in this village. The first sermon that I heard him preach was set home to my heart, as I trust, by the Spirit of God, and new light seemed to dawn upon my path. From that state of my mind I was induced to call upon the Methodist minister, to inquire if he had any work that would assist me to discover the path of Truth. He recommended Rev. Mr. Mahan's Discourses upon "*Christian Perfection.*" I immediately purchased it, read it with deep attention, and then turned to the Bible. I studied them together, with secret prayer to be led into the truth. I was soon compelled

to admit, as the doctrine of the Sacred Scripture, that a *full salvation* was purchased for guilty man,—that provision was made for it in the gospel, that the blessed Saviour did indeed come “to save his people from their sins,” and that unbelief alone shut this blessing from our hearts. I now set myself by prayers and supplication to seek this full salvation. For some time with agonizing interest, yet without success. My health was beginning to fail, through these intense and protracted mental exercises. One evening I retired early, not expecting to sleep, but meditating upon the willingness of the Saviour in the days of his flesh, to heal the diseases and forgive the sins of all who came to him in faith. At this moment, the sins of my whole life seemed to come rolling over me, like mountain-waves, crushing me by their weight. Instantly this passage of Scripture was applied, as if spoken by an audible voice, “*I am he that blotteth out thy sins, for mine own sake.*” But I as instantly repelled it as a delusion of Satan to cheat my soul of heaven. Again the waves of sin returned, and I felt sinking; and as instantly the same blessed words, “*I am he that blotteth out thy sins for mine own sake,*” were applied with more intensity than before; and were again repelled; and so on for several times; when at last the heavens appeared to burst over my head, and I seemed to see the blessed Saviour with my natural eyes, standing with outstretched arms, pouring down streams of salvation, which entered my very heart, while those precious words, “*I am he that blotteth out thy sins for mine own sake,*” came with overpowering sweetness, and entered the inmost recess of the soul. I could attempt to repel them no longer. No, it was blessed reality, and all I can say is, that in view of such love and mercy to a sinful and unworthy worm of the dust, my heart melted, the stone was taken away, tears flowed profusely, and Glory to God in the highest—praise, praise his blessed name for ever, burst from my lips. This was “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” My heart arose to the blessed Saviour that he would come and take possession of his temple, and quick as thought I found him there, the buyers and sellers all turned out, not by scourges, but by the omnipotent power of love.

For hours the precious promises of the gospel, as adapted to every exigence of life, flowed into my mind with such overpowering sweetness, that language fails to describe. A dying world arose to view, together with the apathy of Christians, but there appeared such a fulness, such a sufficiency, in the blessed Saviour, that I felt that I could leave myself, my children, my dearest interest, and a dying world in his blessed hands, without an anxious care as to the result. Exhausted nature at length sunk to repose, but of short duration, and I awoke with this passage solemnly impressed upon my mind: “*Not for your sake do I this, be it known unto thee, but for my own name's sake.*” My soul was now prostrate in the dust, with the

deepest self-abasement. Never did I have such views of the demerit of sin, and of myself as the very chief of sinners. O! it is all of grace, rich and abounding grace. Since that period, for most of the time, my peace has been like a river. I have had many very precious manifestations of the love of a *present Saviour*, he is near and increasingly precious to my soul. His *holy Word* never appeared half so precious, for from its sacred pages, this full salvation beams with all the radiance of mid-day splendor. The throne of grace is a privileged spot—I leave it with regret. True I have had trials, and temptations, and doubts in respect to the path of duty. But blessed be God, I have never cast away my confidence, and indeed these trials have only drawn me nearer to the Saviour. But I live in a cold and cheerless atmosphere in regard to this blessed doctrine, and feel the want of a kindred spirit.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

HOLINESS MUST BE PRACTICAL.

Nothing will so powerfully recommend holiness to our fellow men, as a clear exhibition of it in our lives, and without thus exhibiting it, our professions of it will serve only to bring it into disrepute; indeed holiness is not a notion existing in the head, but universal rectitude of heart and life.

For a person to profess to be all given up to God and yet take undue advantage of his neighbor—to be all on stretch for heaven, and at the same time pursue unjust measures to get riches here—to be governed by Christ, and yet obstinately adhere to his own will when shown to be opposed to the word of God—to desire nothing so much as Jesus, and yet ardently pursue worldly fame—to love the soul and desire its salvation, and say little or nothing about religion to those around him—to desire the spread of the gospel, and yet contribute little or nothing to support those who preach it—to love Christ above all, and yet make no sacrifices for him—will never convince the world of the excellence of holiness. Every body will see the inconsistency. We repeat, *holiness must be practical.*

It has been well observed that it is a great thing to be sanctified, but it is a much greater thing to *live in a sanctified state*. Why, what is it to be sanctified? It is to consecrate the body to the Lord—to present it a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable—to present the whole soul, understanding, will and affections, without the least reserve—to consecrate our time as well as talents—to consecrate our

money, all of it, to God—to consecrate our influence, be it great or small : in short we must feel that we are not our own, every minute that we belong to Christ. And when this entire consecration is made in a believing manner, then God, by his Spirit, powerfully applies the blood, and cleanses the heart from all sin, filling it with *himself*; thus giving us to feel that we are filled *into* all the fulness of God. Love now fills the whole soul, and love, too, that leads to entire obedience to all the will of God. Now as the soul is obedient to God, it grows in grace and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord ; it is in fact just prepared to grow up unto Christ our living head. New discoveries of love, and goodness, and glory, are almost continually made to the soul thus obedient and faithful. The Bible is better understood than ever before ; it is now a rich mine that the soul delights to work—a fountain of never failing comfort—the directory to the great storehouse of blessings on high—it contains his Father's promissory notes ! The soul exclaims, "O, how love I thy law ! it is my meditation all the day."

The world is looked upon no longer as a machine with none to guide it. God is seen in every thing. His voice is heard in the thunder-clap that peals along the heavens. His power is seen in the dreadful tempest that goes careering by ; his majesty in vast creation. O, how boundless, how immense ! He is felt in the gentle zephyr that plays around at evening ; in short the soul feels that it is in him it lives, and moves, and has its being. O how blessed thus to dwell in God !

There is now a delight in doing the will of God, and every act, in obedience to his will, opens a new rill of comfort in the soul. As this blessing is obtained by obedient faith, so it must be maintained ; it is a faith producing entire conformity to his will, and consequently, is retained so long as we are entirely obedient, and no longer : for as soon as we become disobedient, the Spirit is grieved, and departs, leaving an aching void 'this world never fill.' As in obtaining it we consecrated all, so this consecration must be perpetual ; take but one thing back, let it be time, reputation, influence, talents, money, or anything else, and we mar the sacrifice. A man cannot cheat his neighbor and retain the love of God, nor can he *speak* against him without grieving the Holy Spirit ; nor can he squander his money, nor *hoard* it up ; it is the Lord's, and himself only the steward. His time, too, must be spent in some useful way ; to misspend time will offend God, and drive away his Spirit. No person need talk of sanctification while he is misspending his time, or money, or misimproving his talents, or talking against his neighbor, or neglecting to support the gospel, or *saying nothing to his neighbors about their souls*. To be sanctified, is to love and serve God *to the extent of our present ability* ; and we can be holy no longer than this is done. A lazy

man cannot live in a sanctified state. This blessing is the great antidote to human evils. It destroys contention, whispering, backbiting, with all their train of woes, and fills the heart with peace, love, gentleness, goodness, truth. Meekness appears in all he does. He is ready for every good word and work; his heart yearns over sinners, and he will not rest till he has done what he can to save them from sin and hell. He is a good index to the state of the work of God in his neighborhood. He rejoices when the Church prospers, and mourns when it does not. His right hand will as soon forget its cunning, as he forget the Church of God.

E. B. B.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"How precious are thy thoughts unto me; how great is the sum of them."

The soul that reposes itself always in God, has an inward sense of his love, of his loving kindness and tender mercy, such as the heart wandering from God has no conception of. The sweet rest, the blissful repose of such a soul, cannot be expressed; it rests on the bosom of infinite, unchangeable love. Though removed from the object of its love in a natural sense, yet the eye sees, the ear hears. It sees the infinite mind, and reads the thoughts of love, numerous as the sand upon the sea shore, recorded there. It feels the union with the Eternal, the Holy, the Blessed One. Though by nature the chord of union is severed, and man is estranged from God, yet Jesus comes as mediator, as day's-man, and unites the link, and man may now move on harmoniously with God. The element of love, of love supreme, is restored, and for love's sake all is accepted. The sacrifice of Jesus is enough to restore all that is wanting to union and communion with God, for this Jesus is made to us *wisdom*, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*. "The Father himself loveth you," says Jesus. Yes, "He taketh *pleasure* in them that fear him, in them that hope in his mercy." "The Lord's portion is his people." It is not the varied forms of nature, these passing objects of a day, that engage the heart of God, but it is his own image, the immortal, unquenchable spark of man's existence—his being, his soul. O could we read the infinite mind, what thoughts of love should we see written there! Let us stretch our thoughts to comprehend the height and breadth, and length and depth, of infinite love; which love *welcomes* wanderers home,—home to the embrace of love, to the bosom of a God. Return to thy rest, O my soul, and evermore dwell in God.

"Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

O glorious principle of divine love. It comes from Heaven, it is not earth-born. Love is the law of Heaven, the moving principle of Heaven. And since Jesus came down to earth and fulfilled the law, heaven is come to earth, love has come to earth. Happy is the soul that finds Jesus, for he is the way to keep the law—the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that *believeth*. Believeth what? Not a part, but the whole of this salvation. There is rest for the soul no where short of perfect love—supreme love. This love assimilates the soul to God. As He maketh his sun to rise on the evil as well as the good, so does this perfect love flow out in thoughts of love, of mercy, to all mankind. Do to others as ye would that others should do to you, is a safe interpretation of the law of love, as exhibited towards our fellow men. Despair not, O Christian, of fulfilling the law of love, since Jesus came not to destroy but to fulfil the law, and he is thy strength for keeping the law. O stretch thy soul's capacity to lay hold on him, and thus find the law of love fulfilled in thine own breast.

"God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

How often, O weak believer, hast thou sat down dejected, under a sense of thy corrupt, thy fallen nature, without the hope of a present redemption in Christ, from those evils under which thou dost labor? A Saviour, an Almighty Saviour provided, and professedly *thy* Saviour, and yet thou in the desert, in the gloom and despondency of sin. Either thou hast not learnt enough of thyself to cease from self, or art not yet sufficiently acquainted with Jesus, as thy life. Christ is the believer's life; he has no spiritual life without Christ; none, separate from him. This union to Christ begins where self-dependence ceases and is maintained by a constant feeling of dependence on Christ, and a constant exercise of faith for the grace and strength needed. The believer, having surrendered himself a living sacrifice to God, without any reserve, realizes that God is engaged on his side, that the protection and friendship of God is his, and he moves on in the path of obedience without fear, without doubt and fearful anxiety. His life, his hope, his trust, his all, is in Christ. He has ceased from his own works, from all self-dependence, and lives on Christ. O glorious state of grace in which the believer lives; it is grace *always abounding* to the humble, faithful believer. The topstone will be laid in heaven, with shoutings of Grace, grace, grace, to fallen man.

"Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not."

Jesus, Saviour, may I so abide in thee, so rest beneath the shadow of thy wing, as to receive protection from my worst enemy, sin? So as to be saved from myself, so as to lose my nature in thee? O

glorious salvation ! To put off the old man and put on the new man, Christ Jesus, and to walk in newness of life ; onward and upward to walk in Him, even up to the stature of perfect ones in Christ. And then—to sleep in Jesus, and to awake in his glorious likeness ! Verily He is the Alpha and the Omega ; the beginning and the ending of the Christian life. O Jesus, may I know so much of thee as to abide in thee and sin not.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PRAYING FOR THE SAINTS.

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.”

One, saying, “I live not, but Christ liveth in me,” has like interest with those who have made like consecration. And here is found much of the enjoyment given by Jesus to his saints. Praying for each other. What blessing can *we* bestow upon a friend like going to the holy throne, and there calling upon our God and Redeemer, in faith, for *divine* blessings upon that one ? And where can associate hearts, devoted to the Lord Jesus, living as “pilgrims,”—sometimes separated by mountain and valley, wilderness and waters,—where can such find “soothing influences,” but at “the altar of prayer ?” Here, heart meets heart, and spirit greets its kindred.—Here is holy sympathy ; for each rejoices in behalf of the other ; saying, These things that I ask, *shall be done*. And how deep is the communion of mind with mind, when the Infinite Mind is the centre—the medium ! As those professing “*perfect love*,” how ardent, constant, and persevering should we be, in remembering those who have said, “Pray for me.” I cannot forbear repeating some lines which have delighted me much :—the constancy and faith implied in them. Though they were the words of a wife to her husband, as he left her sick room, to go to administer to his people, saying, “*Pray for me*,” they are appropriate for Christian to Christian.

“Pray for thee ? Yes while I’ve breath :
And when my cheek turns pale in death,
When earthly hopes my bosom flee,
With trembling lips, I’ll pray for thee.”

And here, we are reminded of the words of the holy Apostle, as he says, “Wherefore, also, pray we *always for you*.” Again, he reminds us. how much our Father in his wisdom has made us dependent upon

each other, for holy supplication. "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, *through your prayers*, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." We have his request, too. "And (pray) for me, that *utterance* may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly."—Deny me of ease, riches and honor; and even the privilege of personal association: but deny me not the blessedness of holding incomprehensible converse with this or that beloved one, at the hour of prayer; nor of "supplication for all saints." E.

September, 1840.

Our readers will undoubtedly recollect the interesting letters in the Guide, giving an account of the experience of P. P. The following is by the same lady, and copied from the Christian Advocate and Journal. How encouraging to find our friends still progressing in the good way with increasing vigor and delight.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The first part of the following reflections was written without the least reference to publication under the present form; but feeling that the Lord, in accordance with his word, has led me in a plain path, I am earnestly desirous that all the redeemed sons and daughters of our Israel should know its simplicity.

If you think this communication calculated to promote the cause to which you are devoted, it is at your disposal, and possibly other reflections of a similar nature may hereafter meet your eye.

Yours, respectfully,

P.

CLOSET REFLECTIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF GOSPEL HOLINESS.

Christmas day was rendered memorable by my receiving more definite, confirmed views of that precise act of faith which brings present salvation from all sin. These views were preceded by a uncommon humiliation of spirit. During the day, or more especially the latter part of the day, a temptation to hastiness of spirit was continually pressing upon me, and as the enemy had an object to act upon, the suggestion was, that I had more or less yielded to its influence. On examination, though I could not bring conviction that I had offended, and consequently did not feel condemnation, yet I was most deeply humbled under a sense of my unworthiness, and while confessing my want of higher degrees of holiness, and lamenting this before the Lord, I was led to question how it was that I was thus enabled to hold fast the beginning of my confidence, and continually to be a witness that the blood of Jesus cleanseth. I felt that I had not deceived myself, that I could appeal to the Searcher of hearts that it was

not a blessing merely in name that I had gloried in, but that I did actually realize that I was made a *partaker* of this grace; yes, thought I, I do know in verity that the blood of Jesus *cleanseth*, and cleanseth *now*; and with feelings which even the recollections of that hour reproduce, causing tears of grateful joy, I felt that I could say with Paul, "To me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given." Yet for reasons almost undefinable, but which perhaps cannot be better expressed than by saying, the appearance (in the eyes of some) of assuming, by my professing this blessing, a higher state of experience than many others, for whose piety I had a high veneration, and especially some of the beloved ambassadors of Christ, whom I esteem highly in love, for their work's sake, I felt a shrinking and a tenderness of spirit in reference to the testimony I had given before the world; and yet I felt that the vows of God were upon me, and wo is me if I do not profess this blessing, and urge its attainment and reasonableness upon others. And must I continue to urge its necessity, even though it might *assume* the *appearance* of taking higher ground in the Christian walk? I felt that I could weep, and even now *do* weep at the thought. But the plain direct path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, still presented its track, lit up by the rays of divine truth, as luminously as ever. The way was not to be mistaken. I saw what would be the result of a wilful turning, either to the right hand or the left. I felt that I had given my *influence* into the hands of the Lord, and could unhesitatingly leave it there; that *duty* was *mine*, and *events* the Lord's.

I felt most deeply that it was not because I was more worthy than others, that I had been permitted for more than two and a half years past to be a witness of the possibility of living in the enjoyment of the knowledge that the blood of Jesus *cleanseth* from all unrighteousness; neither would I assume the ground, that I have not trespassed in thought, word, or deed, since that time; *no*, but in this, through grace, will I glory; that I have not since that memorable hour that witnessed the entire consecration of all my powers, taken myself from off the altar, but have ceaselessly endeavored to present a living sacrifice of *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*; since that period I have not felt as if any of these consecrated powers was for one moment at my *own* disposal: when duty has been presented, however much nature may have shrunk from the requisition, I have been enabled to act upon this principle, I have given myself irrevocably to God, and though life might be the forfeiture, still I have felt that the favor of my God was better than life: neither have I since that period knowingly transgressed. Yet I do not take this as the precise ground of my confidence, but this *state of soul*, in conjunction with an act of faith, which like a key opens the door, and brings the soul into the actual possession of full and complete redemption, is that which I have been ena-

bled continually to render available, and by this I have been permitted to enter into that state of light and liberty spoken of by the apostle, 1 John i. 7.

But what is this precise act of faith which brings the soul into this enjoyment? By the help of the Lord I will state the definite manner by which I came into its possession, and the only way by which I retain it. I saw that infinite purity and love had erected an altar, whereunto I was commanded to come with faith, nothing wavering; and still farther I saw that God did not require me to believe without giving a thorough foundation for my belief. Perhaps I cannot better explain myself than by adverting to what our expectations would be, if a will which we knew to be in every possible way legally executed was placed in our hands, and we were authorized from undoubted authority in believing ourselves the rightful heirs, would we hesitate putting ourselves in possession of its immunities, and think it strangely mysterious how we were to come in possession, by merely believing the validity of the document? And yet we well know that the mere knowledge of the fact, without the precise act of taking possession, would render it just as unavailable for our *present* necessities as though there was no such possession for us. Thus I saw that God had declared it his will, even my sanctification; he had rendered it also very explicit by the demand and declaration, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." In view of such a portion of my heavenly Father's will, had I any reason to doubt whether it was his will, even *my sanctification*?—What then remained for me to do, but, through the strength of grace, to come out and be separate. This I was enabled to comply with; and would it not have been inconsistent, after having come to this point, not to have believed that God would accept and be my God? And did it require an extraordinary effort of faith to believe that I was indeed one of his covenant people? And it was thus, therefore, in the fulness of my heart, I said, "Why, it is hardly by faith, it is so simple and easy. It is all here—I have given myself away to God; he has accepted the offering, and sealed me wholly his. And would it not be strange, and in effect doing dishonor to God, by believing him guilty of an inconsistency, if, when he had commanded the entire surrender, and through grace enabled me to comply, not to believe he would be true to his own part of the engagement?"

But to return to the more definite answer which presented itself to my mind, in reply to the inquiry, how I, so unworthy, was enabled to be clear in the witness of this blessing, when there were so many whose piety I held in such high veneration were not? And the only explanation I could give was this: I have faith in God, and believe

fully in the validity and feasibility of the plan devised by infinite wisdom, by which the polluted may be cleansed: the plan, in perfect consistency with the nature of its Author, is unalterable; the devotion that might induce its possessor to pass through the flames, or to weep tears of blood, cannot produce an alteration, or the least swerving from the plan laid down. By the right of purchase, God demands and beseeches that I present my body a *living* sacrifice; I present it, and am cleansed; I continue to present it, and continue to be cleansed. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, with his garments newly dipped in blood, is continually present before the throne; and it is but to know that I lay all upon the altar, and to believe in the infinitely meritorious efficacy of his blood, in order to realize with all the blood-washed company,

“Every moment, Lord, I have
The merit of thy death.”

It is then, and then only, we can mingle in the song with the spirits of the just made perfect, already around the throne, and in the triumph also of those of earth, who with robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, are momentarily rising upward in the strength of this faith. Who does not feel the impotency of human language when the full soul endeavors to bring out in *words* the transcendant blessedness of this conscious purity; when the soul exultingly sings, Unto Him who hath loved *me*, and redeemed *me*, and washed *me* in his own blood, be glory, &c.; and yet there are those who from a blessed understanding of its glorious import are appropriating this confident language as most sweetly expressive of their individual experience, and still also there are those who have, by the will of their heavenly Father, an equal claim in the covenant of mercy, who, in the full belief of this truth, “God is no respecter of persons;” yes, some even who by their devotion of spirit, as has before been stated, would pass through the flames, if called to do so, who do not possess this blessing. **WHY IS IT THUS?** Would that my heart were as a mirror, to reflect out in living characters the answer that its deep emotions dictate to the proposed inquiry. May the Spirit of holiness communicate the answer to every sincere, inquiring Christian who may read these lines, while, by divine assistance, I attempt a reply to the inquiry. There are, as has been said, certain unalterable requisitions laid down by the immutable Jehovah, which cannot be overstepped, however sincere or devoted the inquirers: these individuals have probably over and again brought their all to the altar, but they have not firmly believed that God would be *true* to what they have every reason to believe to be his nature, and accept the offering at their hands; they well know it to be the very sacrifice he

has required, and that they could not even have brought the offering without his assistance, and still they hesitate to believe, because they do not *feel* that he has accepted it before they have confidence enough to venture upon the veracity of his word: he has commanded the sacrifice, he has declared his willingness to accept it, and still farther has given the ability to bring it to the foot of the cross, and yet they will not believe that he *does* receive, merely because some state of *feeling*, which has been pictured to the mind as the result, does not immediately follow, or, more properly, precede it. The experience of many might be portrayed by what would have been the conduct of Abraham if, after having brought the offering commanded by God, he had concluded, instead of remaining by the altar, driving away the fowls from polluting the consecrated offering, to reason thus: "The fire of heaven does not come at the precise moment when my conjectures had anticipated, and though I well know that God has required this sacrifice, yet why does he not now consume it? Why is my faith thus tried, and do I of necessity thus wait, preserving this hallowed offering from the touch of pollution? And who can determine how long I may be required thus to wait in this disheartening suspense? Already the sun begins to retire, a horror of darkness comes over me; surely there must have been some mistaken views in my perceptions of the manner of this requirement!" Not so too with him who to all succeeding generations has been termed the father of the faithful; no! his enlightened perceptions of the immutable nature of Him who had promised forbade such views: we shrink even from the supposition of what would have been the inevitable consequence, had he done as many Christians do under this dispensation of light; and yet they speak of their unbelief with a seeming complacency, or as of an unavoidable evil, where they stand comparatively as helpless aggressors! O that all who are seeking this blessing were fully awake to the sinful inconsistency of this unbelief! If Abraham had been guilty of even this one supposed act of distrustfulness, would he have been placed so prominently before us as the father of the faithful? And yet the Christian, with a revelation of the will of God open before him, day after day is practising upon the same principles of unbelief; the younger Christian not unfrequently looks to the example of one older in profession, the member to the class-leader, the class-leader to one who should be an example in word, doctrine, and experience, and each feel themselves in a measure excusable from the example of the other. The mention of this reminds me of the dilemma of a devoted individual, not long since, young in the experience of this blessing, who had returned from an experience meeting, where the beloved pastor in the recital of his experience had said that he did not enjoy the witness of this blessing. "O," said she, in distressing perplexity, "can it be that I enjoy this blessing, when Mr.

— does not?" The enemy made the well-circumstanced incident the means of nearly robbing her of her confidence; but grace triumphed.

And is it of small moment to be destitute of that faith whereby we may be enabled to realize momentarily (for it is here I find in my own experience its excellence most prominently to consist) the entire consecration and purification of body, soul, and spirit to Him who hath said, "Ye are not your own?" Is it a small thing to keep back any part of that price which belongs most sacredly to God by the right of purchase, either by not being willing to part with all, or by the fearfulness of unbelief? To such as do not esteem it to be a subject of most momentous interest, may the Lord give to feel the force of the truth, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" but to such as are waiting at the foot of the cross, feeling that the excellency of this knowledge is even more desirable than life, I would say, "You will find it in this exercise." Lay body and soul, with all your redeemed faculties, upon the altar; let the sacrifice be a living one; believe steadfastly that the blood of Jesus *cleanseth* from all unrighteousness; covenant with God that you will believe this his revealed truth, whether your feelings warrant the belief or not; be willing to *live by the moment*; you cannot breathe to-day for the morrow, neither can you believe now for any future period. Remember, it is a *present salvation received momentarily* from above. Ask that the Lord write upon your heart the deep spiritual meaning of these expressions—a *living* sacrifice—the blood of Jesus *cleanseth*—and "as ye have received Christ Jesus, so walk in him;" for let me assure you, that though from this hour you may live days, months, and years in the possession of this faith, you will find no other way than that of living by the moment; and though you were the veriest sinner that ever trod the earth, or were it even thus, that all the sins ever committed were placed on your head, yet such is the unbounded efficacy of the atonement, that it is but to place yourself upon this altar, that sanctifieth the gift, and you must be *cleansed*. The crimson stream, unbounded in its efficacy, is ever flowing. Reject this simple way of faith, and the most violent efforts of body or mind, rivers of tears, or the devotion of a martyr, will not bring you to the point; and though you will probably be saved as by fire, you will find yourself to have been an infinite loser. You cannot receive the full efficacy of the atonement apart from this faith, neither can you recommend it as successfully to others; and a debt of gratitude you owe the purchaser demands that you be his witness of the attainment of this grace.

It is this implicit trusting in God, with a resolute determination not to proportion *faith to feeling*, believing, if he permit your faith

to be tried by a seeming delay, it is but that you may be accounted worthy of being a more victorious example of faith, which will produce a fixedness of purpose, and an established experience, beyond all expression glorious. And let the experience of one who has proved the ground here designated, and found it firm as the rock of ages, induce you, whatever your present unfitness may be, to come *now*. Look well at the terms. Holiness and sanctification most expressively signify the state intended; and you cannot consistently expect it unless you are *willing* to live in this momentary consecration; consequently you *cannot believe* until you come to this point. Count the cost fully. Enter into the bonds of an everlasting covenant to *live* in the entire devotion of all your powers. This is the living sacrifice required. While you present it, "the blood of Jesus cleanseth." In the strength of Omnipotence venture now upon the ground—and you will immediately find what you had thought to be the mystery of faith simplified. P.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

DEAR BROTHER,—The gracious work of holiness is spreading in this section of country; many, very many, are *now* walking in the unclouded sunshine of God's wondrous love, holding fast to sound words and sound faith. Blessed be God, it is a day of glad tidings. My own soul never partook of such joys as flow from that love which casts out fear that hath torment, more than at the present. I never saw the way to live by faith plainer or easier. I feel that I *am* crucified to the world, and the world crucified to *me*. I am *dead*, but I have a *life hid* with Christ. Words cannot express the gratitude of my heart at times when I reflect that my lot has been cast with a people who not only believe *in*, but *actually* live *in* the constant enjoyment of perfect love. Glory, glory to God in the highest, salvation from sin on earth; the best news that ever saluted the ears of man.

The work of conviction is deepening and widening in the church for entire sanctification; very many are panting after God, crying out,

Surely I shall, the sinner, I,
Shall serve thee, without fear,
If thou my nature sanctify,
In answer to my prayer.

I have attended two camp-meetings where many were made clean. In one tent at the Bucksport meeting, I learned that twelve were made whole. Glory to God! Ride on, thou Prince of Peace, till the world is filled with thy glory.

Yours for a full salvation,
North Castine, Sept. 15, 1840.

T. HILL.

It affords us unspeakable pleasure to find a whole Presbytery of ministers adopting the sentiments contained in the following report. Such have ever been the views of the Wesleyan Methodists the world over. We must, however, object to their use of the term "Arminian." We are aware that there has been a class of people called Arminians, who have depended more on morality than on the regenerating grace of God for the salvation of their souls. We doubt not our brethren have reference to them in the use of that term. We object to that plan of salvation. But it was not the doctrine of Arminius, and therefore is not entitled to the sanction of his name. He taught that, "in order to man's conversion and salvation, he must be regenerated and renewed by the operations of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ." We object to such use of the term, not only because it does Arminius discredit, but because it is calculated to do mischief in the cause we wish to promote. We presume it is generally understood, that the Methodists adopt the leading doctrines taught by Arminius, and that they are called Arminians in contra-distinction from Calvinists. Hence it will be very natural for Christians in general to conclude that the Presbytery dissent from their views of Christian perfection. And if it were so understood, the result would be evil. If our friends of other denominations who enjoy the blessing of perfect love, supposed us to be in an error, they would, of course, avoid us; and on the other hand, if it should be understood that they were teaching another gospel, the Methodist church would raise a warning voice against them. But as on this subject we are one in doctrine, experience and practice, it is highly important that we cast not away our confidence in each other. Our union and mutual love will astonish the world, and lead Christians to seek for like precious faith.

While we suggest to our brethren that the error they oppose may more properly be termed Socinian or Pelagian, our prayer is that there may be no strife among us. We will try to avoid it. And may the Lord fill them with all the fulness of God.

K.

From the Oberlin Evangelist.

REPORT ON SANCTIFICATION, ADOPTED BY THE DETROIT
(MICH.) PRESBYTERY.

As there are different classes of persons who pass under the appellation of Perfectionists, it is necessary to ascertain their real views, before we can decide what course we should pursue towards them.

There is a class of Perfectionists that are Antinomians of the worst stamp; who abrogate all law, and turn the grace of God into licentiousness. There is another class of Perfectionists who lower down the law of God to the standard of human attainment. This is the Arminian scheme; and though not equally pernicious, like the Antinomian, its natural tendency and general result are decidedly bad.

But there is another class still—who maintain that the moral law, in all its strictness and spirituality, is the standard of duty both for saints and sinners; and that although they despair of securing obedience on the ground of the sinner's natural ability, yet believe that provision has been made in the gospel for our entire sanctification; provision that is available to us by faith, and hence, that through Jesus Christ assisting us by his grace, we are enabled to get the victory over every sin, and to love God and our neighbor, as demanded in his law; provided we rely upon Jesus Christ for our sanctification as well as for our pardon and salvation.

These views of sanctification have somewhat recently been exhibited to the churches, in a novel method, which has not yet been subjected to the test of time. Presbytery, however, do not regard them unscriptural or dangerous in their tendencies, provided we correctly apprehend them; but, on the contrary, as directly calculated to promote eminent holiness of heart and life. While, therefore, we feel bound to withdraw our sanction from such as would propagate Antinomian or Arminian Perfectionism, and would by no means approve of our members going after those who propagate those errors, we would desire to be distinctly understood by the inquirer and the churches, that we believe that *entire sanctification is the demand of the law and gospel, and ATTAINABLE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST*; that He is able to save his people *from* their sins; to sanctify them wholly, in body, soul, and spirit; to redeem us from all iniquity; fill us with all the fulness of God; keep us from falling, and present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy. And that having such an Almighty Redeemer, we should receive Him as a whole Saviour; like Paul, count all things but loss for the knowledge of Him; and "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, should press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We believe, that if we come short of ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION, we *despise a blood-bought privilege*, which is of inestimable value, and we are guilty of very aggravated unbelief—that it is the love of sin and unbelief alone, that will prevent the attainment of entire sanctification by believers, IN THE EARLY PART OF THEIR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

Pontiac, July 30, 1840.

FRAGMENT.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.—Isaiah xxvi, 3.

The very centre of the Christian religion is union with Christ, and the receiving him as our all; in other words, called faith, or a "staying our minds upon him." To the doing this, there are many hindrances, but the two greatest and most general ones are:—

First, the want of self-knowledge; this keeps ninety-nine out of one hundred from Christ. They know not, or rather feel not that they are blind, naked, leprous, helpless, and condemned; that all their works can make no atonement, and that nothing they can do will fit them for heaven. When this is truly known, the first grand hindrance to our union with Christ is removed.

The second is the want of understanding "the Gospel of Christ:" the want of seeing therein the firm foundation given us for this pure and simple faith, the only solid ground of staying our souls on God. We must remember that the Gospel is "good news," and not be slow of heart to believe it. Christ receiveth sinners; he undertaketh their whole concern; he giveth not only repentance, but remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. He creates them anew: his love first makes the bride, and then he delights in her. The want of viewing Christ in this light, as the author and finisher of our salvation, hinders the poor, humble penitent from casting himself wholly on the Lord, although he hath said, "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

I do not mention sin, for sin is the very thing which renders man the object of Christ's pity: our sins will never turn away the heart of Christ from us, for they brought him down from heaven to die in our place; and the reason why iniquity separates between God and our souls, is because it turns our eyes from him, and shuts up in us the capacity of receiving those beams of love, which are ever descending upon and offering themselves to us. But sin, sincerely lamented, and brought by "a constant act of faith" and prayer before the Lord, shall soon be consumed, as the thorns laid close to a fire; only let us abide thus waiting, and the Lord will pass through them and burn them up together.

When the soul feels its own helplessness, and receives the glad tidings of the Gospel, it ventures upon Christ; and though the world, the flesh, and the devil pursue, so that the soul seems often to be on the brink of ruin, it has only to listen to the Gospel, and venture on Christ, as a drowning man on a single plank, with "I can but perish;" remembering these words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee," because he trusteth in thee.

The consequence of thus trusting is, that God keeps the soul from its threefold enemy: defends it in temptation, in persecution, in heaviness. Through all it finds power to repose itself on Christ, to say, "God shall choose my inheritance for me." Here the Christian finds peace with God, peace with himself, and peace with all around him; the peace of pardon, the peace of holiness; for both are obtained through staying the mind on Christ. He walks in the perpetual recollection of a present God, and is not disturbed by any thing. If he feels sin, he carries it to the Saviour; and if in heaviness, through manifold temptations, he still holds fast his confidence, he is above the region of clouds.

The careless sinner is not to be exhorted to trust in Christ; it would be to cast pearls before swine. Before an act of faith, there must be an act of self-despair; before filling, there must be emptiness. Is this thy character? Then suffer me to take away thy false props. Upon what dost thou stay thy soul? Thy honesty, morality, humility, doing good, using the means, business, friends, confused thoughts of God's mercy! This will never do. Thou must be brought to say, "What shall I do to be saved?" Without trembling at God's word, thou canst not receive Christ. Nothing short of love will do.

The penitent needs, and, blessed be God, has every encouragement. You have nothing but sin;—it is time you should understand the Gospel. You see yourself sinking,—Christ is with you.

You despair of yourself,—hope in Christ. You are overcome,—Christ conquers. Self-condemned,—he absolves. Why do not you believe? Is not the messenger, the word, the Spirit of God sufficient? You want a joy unspeakable,—the way to it is by thus waiting patiently upon God. Look to Jesus. He speaks peace; abide looking, and your peace shall flow as a river.—*Fletcher*.

PLEASE READ THE COVER.

There are quite too many who neglect the directions on the cover. Knowing that the law required those who did not give notice to have a periodical discontinued at the close of a year, to continue and pay for another volume, we published a notice three months, about the close of the last year, so that no one need be deceived. But notwithstanding the fair warning our subscribers had, the greater part of those who wished to discontinue neglected that duty, and even now, after we have sent three Nos. of Vol. 2, we get word from some of our subscribers that they do not want it for the year to come. So they break a *volume*; and do not even offer to pay for the part which we have sent them. Where is the Christianity, the honor, or even the justice of such a course? We must expose such errors as a warning to others. We have no fellowship for such proceedings. We protest against anything of the kind. If any of our subscribers wish to discontinue at the close of their subscription year, let them give proper notice, and we shall do our duty cheerfully. And we would remind some of them that they commenced about a year ago.

While we thus complain, we have one cheering fact for our readers. Probably seven eighths of all our old subscribers continue their subscription.

Again, our directions say, "payable in advance." But a few of our subscribers have paid for only the first year. Another year's subscription is now due. Our brethren will please send it by private conveyance, pay it to a preacher, or get the Post Master to forward as he is at liberty to do free of expense. You can forward a dollar without inconvenience; but the want of the two thousand dollars which is now due, is felt by us. All the littles put together would be an essential benefit to us.

One word to our particular friends. We want 1,000 more subscribers to take up the back numbers of Vol. 2. It depends mainly on you to say whether they shall be lost to us and the world, or be circulated to our advantage and the good of the church.

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

NOVEMBER, 1840.

NO. 5.

SERMON BY PRESIDENT MAHAN.

CHRISTIANS DEAD TO THE LAW, BY THE BODY OF CHRIST.

TEXT—Rom vii 4: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

The principle involved in this passage is a fundamental principle of the gospel. Till we have a distinct understanding of this principle, "we need that one teach us again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." At the same time, there is hardly another passage of scripture, the true meaning of which is more likely to be perverted, and when perverted exerts a more fatal influence. In expounding such a passage, it becomes us to proceed with great caution, and with devout dependence upon that divine illumination which alone can "make darkness light before us." In explaining the great principle involved in this passage, the attention of the reader will be directed to the following propositions:

- I. WHAT IS THE LAW HERE REFERRED TO?
- II. IN WHAT SENSE HAS THE CHRISTIAN BECOME DEAD TO THIS LAW?
- III. THE MEANS BY WHICH HE HAS BECOME DEAD TO THE LAW.
- IV. THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH HE HAS BECOME THUS DEAD.

I. Our first inquiry is, *What is the Law here referred to?* I answer:

1. The law, to which the Apostle refers in this passage, is not the ceremonial law. That law has itself become dead. Christ has "blotted out the hand writing of ordinances," "nailing them to his cross." To the ceremonial law the Christian has not died: that, on the other hand, has died to him. Hence I remark:

2. The law referred to in this passage, is the MORAL LAW.

(1.) The moral, and not the ceremonial law, is the special subject of remark by the Apostle, in various parts of this Epistle. Without particular intimations to the contrary, we should suppose that the same law is referred to in this passage.

(2.) The law here referred to, is the law which forbids *lust, covetousness, &c.* Verse 7: "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." There is no law in existence which forbids covetousness, and in the light of which lust is sinful, but the moral law. But this is the law to which, according to the express teaching of the Apostle, the Christian has "become dead."

(3.) The law here referred to, gives the "knowledge of sin." "Nay," says the Apostle, "I had not known sin, but by the law." Again, "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Every one who will read verses 4—7, of this chapter, will perceive that the same law is the subject of remark throughout the passage. Now what law teaches us the knowledge of sin, but the moral law? But this is the law to which, according to Paul, the Christian has "become dead." The law, then, referred to in this passage is the moral law. We are now prepared to inquire:

II. In what sense has the Christian become dead to the law?

1. The Christian has not become dead to the law by being freed from it, as a *rule of duty*. In Rom. viii. 1—4, we learn, that one grand object of Christ's redemption is, to bring Christians into a state of entire obedience to the requirements of the law. "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." To suppose, that Christ died to free us from the law as a rule of duty, and at the same time, to bring us into subjection to the requirements of the same law, is to suppose that two purposes, perfectly contradictory to each other, enter, as fundamental elements, into the plan of redemption. The Christian, then, has not become free from the law, as a rule of duty. In this sense he has not become dead to the law.

Again: 1 John iii. 4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law." Here the Apostle, addressing Christians, informs them, that in committing sin they would transgress also the law. This undeniably evinces, that he regarded them as yet subject to the law as a rule of duty; since no person can be held as a transgressor of a law, to which he is not thus subject.

Once more—James ii. 8, 9: "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors." How manifest is it from these verses, especially when contemplated in the connection in which they stand, that the Apostle intended to impress Christians with the conviction, that

they are subject to the law as a rule of duty. "Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." Yes, Christian, the law, the moral law, in all the length, and breadth, and spirituality of its requisitions, is still binding upon you.—*This is your rule of duty.*

2. The Christian has not become dead to the law, by being freed from *obligation* to obey its requisitions. This is clearly implied in what has been said to show that the law is binding upon us as a rule of duty. To say, that we are under the law as a rule of duty, and yet free from *obligation* to obey that law, would involve the most palpable contradiction conceivable.

But the redemption of Christ, instead of diminishing, has infinitely increased our obligation to obey the law. All that the law requires of us is, that we "love God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves." Without a redemption, we should be under obligation to obey this law. What then must be our obligation, now, as spectators of the infinite love, and glory, and excellence, manifested in the plan of redemption, as ourselves the objects of such love? Has the revelation of the fact, that "God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever would believe on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life," diminish our obligation to love Him with all the powers of our being? God forbid. It has infinitely increased our obligation. If unredeemed spirits around the Throne, recognize themselves as under obligations infinite to love God with all their heart, and with all their strength, with what intenseness should the redeemed feel their obligations thus to love?

In what sense, then, has the Christian become dead to the law?—
I answer:

3. He has become wholly and for ever dead to the law as a rule of *justification*. Rom. iii. 20—22: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." Under the law, the Christian, in consequence of disobedience, would fall under the sentence of condemnation. For this reason he is freed from the law as a rule of justification. Justification is secured to him by the grace of God, on the condition of faith in Christ. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law."

4. The Christian has also become dead to the law, as the means of *sanctification*. Under a dispensation purely legal, no sinner can be sanctified. Every influence descending upon him, under such circumstances, will tend, not to his return to holiness, but to increase his de-

pravity and guilt. Before the transgressor can be reformed at all, he must be wholly freed from the influence of a dispensation purely legal, and placed under an influence not contemplated in law, a dispensation of grace. This is what the grace of God has accomplished for redeemed sinners. They have "become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that they should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead; that they should bring forth fruit unto God." "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Hence we learn, (Acts xv. 9,) that God purifies the hearts of Christians, not by legal influence, but by FAITH. "Purifying their hearts by faith."

The reader will not understand me as affirming, that the law has nothing to do with the sanctification of the believer. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Conviction of guilt is through the law. But conviction is one thing—sanctification is quite another. Conviction, however strong, has, under a dispensation purely legal, no tendency whatever to sanctification; but to precisely the opposite state. Under the weight of conviction, the most deep and intense, lost spirits will forever sink to deeper and deeper depths of depravity and guilt. Such would be the exclusive tendency of conviction upon redeemed sinners, but for the grace of Christ. Conviction, which is a necessary *condition* of sanctification, but no part of the thing itself, is through the law. Sanctification is exclusively through another influence; an influence not contemplated in law; an influence which descends upon us through the grace of Christ, received by faith. Sanctification is practicable to sinners on one condition only. They must "become dead to the law;" that is—they must be wholly freed from the influence of a dispensation purely legal, and placed under that of an entirely different dispensation; a dispensation in which sanctification is consequent on a union of the heart to Christ by faith.

III. *The means by which the Christian has become dead to the law.*

It is "by the body of Christ;" that is, by his death, or redemption. The natural state of all moral agents—the condition, I mean, in which their moral agency commences—is subjection to a dispensation purely legal. In this condition angels and all unredeemed spirits ever have been, and ever will be, to all eternity. So with man, at the commencement of his moral agency. At that moment the law meets him with its pure requisitions and infinite sanctions. But man has fallen. Remaining under a dispensation of law, he is lost for ever.—At this crisis, infinite mercy interposes. The death of Christ renders

it proper for God to place man under a dispensation in which pardon, sanctification, and full recovery from the consequences of sin, are conditioned, not on deeds of law, but upon faith in Christ. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

IV. The reasons why the Christian has become dead to the law.

Two reasons are assigned in the text:

1. "That he might be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead;" that is—that he might be placed under a dispensation entirely new—a dispensation of grace—a dispensation in which he is not thrown upon his own resources, as when placed under law; but permitted to look to Christ by faith, to meet his necessities as a sinner, under condemnation, and hopelessly lost under the power of sin.

2. "That he might bring forth fruit unto God." Under law, eternal death is the portion of the sinner. In Christ he is free from all condemnation; "bears much fruit to the glory of God,"—"fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

That you might be thus united to Christ, and consequently "bring forth fruit unto God," you, Christian, have "become dead to the law by the body of Christ."

REMARKS.

1. We may now understand who the old husband, to whom the Apostle refers, is. In the text, reference is had to the state in which all moral agents naturally are—subject to a dispensation purely legal. The old husband, then, is the moral law, presented in the form of positive precept, with its rewards and penalties.

2. We may also understand who the new husband is. "That ye might be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead." The new husband is the "Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory." In Him "all fulness dwells." In Him believers are complete. In Him all the demands of their being are met, and met perfectly. In Him the law is presented, not in the form of precept, with its eternal rewards and burning penalties; but in the infinitely more attractive, soul-subduing, soul-transforming aspect of example. When the glory of Christ is presented to the mind of the believer, as "he turns aside to see this great sight," and "beholds, as in a glass, the glory of the

Lord," he is "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The law itself is "put into his mind," and "written in his heart," and the entire current of his being is sweetly drawn into the channel of pure love, and implicit obedience.

3. The nature of the union between Christ and the believer, referred to in the text, next demands our attention. "That ye might be married to another." The union here referred to, is a union to Christ by faith. It is the "new covenant," spoken of in Jer. xxxi. 31—34, Heb. viii. 8—13, and elsewhere. In entering into this union or covenant, the believer, on the one hand, does the following things:

(1.) He feels and acknowledges his utter helplessness and hopelessness in himself.

(2.) The perfect fulness and all-sufficiency of Christ, to meet his entire necessities as a creature, and especially as a sinner.

(3.) With cordial and implicit faith; that is—confidence in his faithfulness and love, he receives Christ, and casts himself upon Him, for the very purpose for which Christ is presented in the scriptures, as the object of our faith.

With a consciousness of his own infinite guilt, deep depravity, perfect blindness, darkness, and ignorance, the believer looks to Christ as his "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

Christ, on the other hand, receives the believer to the full and free participation of his own infinite fulness. The object of Christ, in all his dispensations towards the believer now is, to give to all his powers and susceptibilities the most complete, and perfect, and beautiful development to free him from all condemnation; to guard him from all evil, temporal and eternal; to "cleanse him from all his filthiness and from all his idols;"—to give him a triumphant victory over every enemy; to render his "peace as a river, and his righteousness as the waves of the sea;" to transform him so entirely into his own likeness, that his whole spirit, and deportment, before God and the world, shall present a pure reflection of his own image, and at last to place him among the morning stars, there to "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars, for ever and ever." "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their

hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." All this, Christ pledges himself to accomplish for the believer, according to his faith. "According to thy faith, be it unto thee."

Such is the union between the Lord of glory and the believer. And, reader, to all this boundless fulness Christ is now inviting you. Are you prepared to receive Him? "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. Reader, has God made known to you the "riches of the glory of this mystery," which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory?"

4. We are now prepared to answer the question, What is the old or first covenant? Considerable has been said upon this subject since the views of Brother FINNEY upon it have been spread before the public. For particular reasons, I will, in a few words, direct the attention of the reader to this subject. I remark:

(1.) That the first or old covenant was not the ceremonial law. This, as we learn, (Heb. ix. 1,) constituted a part of this covenant; but was not itself the covenant. This I affirm for the obvious reason, that it is no where in the scriptures spoken of as the covenant.. Further—the first covenant was broken by the Jews, while the ceremonial law they always scrupulously observed. Hence God says, "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before me."

(2.) The first or old covenant was not the Abrahamic covenant. The former, as we learn, (Jer. xxxi. 31, 32,) was made with the "house of Israel and with the house of Judah, in the day in which God took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." This was "four hundred and thirty years" after the latter covenant was made.

(3.) The first or old covenant was not the promise, "I will be a God to thee," &c. This is a fundamental element of the Abrahamic covenant, and also of the new covenant. This leads me to remark:

(4.) That the first or old covenant was that which constituted the basis of the union between God and the Jews, or, primarily, the *moral law*. This I argue:

a. From the fact, that the first or old covenant was the covenant which the Jews broke, "which my covenant they break." Now what covenant, but the moral law, did the Jews actually break? The

terms first covenant and moral law, then, must refer primarily to one and the same thing.

b. The moral law is frequently and by way of emphasis, in the Old Testament called *the covenant*. See Ex. xxxiv. 28, 29, and Deut. ix. 11, 15.

c. The moral law is declared to be the first or old covenant, by the Apostle: Gal. iv. 21—24: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar." That the law which is here represented as identical with the first or old covenant, is the moral law, is evident from the context: "That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Here, surely, the moral law is the subject of remark. But this law, as the Apostle goes on to show, is the first covenant.

5. We may now also understand in what sense the first or old covenant has "vanished away." "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

(1.) The first covenant or moral law, has, to all unredeemed moral agents, in no sense whatever "vanished away."

(2.) To redeemed sinners it has not "vanished away" in this sense, that it has ceased with them to be a rule of duty. In this sense, the moral law constitutes an essential element of both covenants, the new as well as the old.

(3.) With all believers, the first covenant, or moral law, has "vanished away" in this sense. They are for ever separated from a dispensation purely legal, and placed under the hallowed influence of a dispensation of grace. With them the moral law, as the rule of justification, and the means of holiness or sanctification, has for ever "vanished and passed away." In this blessed fact is centered all our hopes of pardon, of holiness and heaven. To us, as sinners, the law, as well as the Law-giver himself, is a "consuming fire." But, blessed be God, divine grace has not brought us to the "mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words." But it has brought us unto "Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem," and to "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel." "By the body of Christ"

we have become dead to the terrible influence of pure law upon sinners, "the grace of God which bringeth salvation, having appeared."

6. We see in what sense Christ is responsible for the pardon and holiness of his creatures. When the creature has complied with the condition on which any blessing is promised, Christ has graciously assumed the responsibility of fulfilling the promise. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

7. We see how it is, that different persons may agree in the adoption of a certain phraseology, and yet wholly differ in their real sentiments.

The Perfectionist, for example, affirms that he has "become dead to the law, by the body of Christ." When the real meaning which he attaches to such phraseology is ascertained, we find it to be this:—He is for ever freed from the law, not only as the rule of justification and the means of holiness, but as a rule of duty. Yes, he is free from all obligation of every kind. The advocate of the doctrine of Christian Perfection adopts the same phraseology, because it is the phraseology of the Bible. But ascertain the meaning which he attaches to such phraseology, and you find it to be this:—He is not free from the law at all as a rule of duty; while he is for ever free from it, as the rule of justification, and the means of sanctification. Pardon and holiness he expects not through deeds of the law, but by faith in Christ.

The Perfectionist also, in common with the advocate of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, avows his belief in the doctrine of entire sanctification, &c. Now when you ascertain the real ideas which each of these individuals attaches to such terms, you find, that they differ as widely as light from darkness. The idea which the former attaches to the terms perfection, sanctification, holiness, &c., is, in the estimation of the latter, the *perfection of licentiousness*.

So, when these two individuals talk about Christ's being responsible, being "faithful and just," about the "rest of the gospel," or being led by the Spirit, the ideas which they attach to such terms and phrases, and which they intend to convey through them, are perfect antipodes to each other. The advocate of the doctrine of Christian Perfection adopts certain terms and phrases in common with the Perfectionist, for the obvious reason, that he must do it, or abandon the phraseology of the Bible.

8. The great injustice often done, at the present time, to individuals and classes of persons, will readily occur to the mind of the reader; the injustice I refer to, of representing persons as agreeing in sentiment, simply because they agree in the use of certain terms, while the ideas which they avowedly attach to such terms are directly opposed to each other. Our influence, as advocates of truth, depends in a great degree upon a sacred integrity of character manifested in

its advocacy. The rectitude of character manifested by such an individual, must present a pure reflection of the rectitude of the cause which he advocates. The man who will oppose the sentiments of another, without having first ascertained what those sentiments really are, who will impute to another doctrines or principles which he disavows, or will class him with persons with whom he essentially differs; such a person, however true or hallowed the cause which he advocates may be, stands before God and the world, as unworthy of the sacred office of an advocate of truth. Nor does God's word or providence authorize the expectation in such an individual, that the sacredness of his cause will render successful his unhallowed advocacy of it. "They who bear the vessels of the Lord," "must have clean hands and a pure heart." They must speak of men and their sentiments as they are, and not as they are not; or God will not suffer truth itself to prosper in their hands. I leave the reader to make his own application of the above remarks, with the statement of two facts—which are given, not because they relate to myself, or associates, but as general characteristics of the manner in which much of the religious controversy of the present day is conducted; characteristics which give me gloomy apprehensions of the condition of even many a standard-bearer in Israel.

(1.) Some years ago, I made the public statement, that if any person would show any thing intrinsic in the doctrine of Christian Perfection, as held and explained by myself and associates, at all akin to, or tending towards Perfectionism, I would be among the first to abandon the doctrine. No one has done this, and but one solitary individual has, to my knowledge, even attempted to do it. Yet how untiring have been the efforts of those who differ from us, to persuade the public, that we are in reality Perfectionists, and that our sentiments and Perfectionism are in their essential elements identical.

(2.) I have been at much pains to give to all that brethren have said in opposition to this doctrine, a careful, and I hope a prayerful perusal. And I here say, in the fear of God, that I have not, as I recollect, met with a single publication of this kind, of which I did not feel bound to declare—*This writer has not stated the doctrine as we really hold and expound it, nor replied to our arguments as presented by us.* One of the strongest indications that I feel, not only of the truth of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, but of the fact, that God designs to carry it triumphantly through the churches, is the manner in which it is universally met by its opposers. The conscious weakness of their cause, is clearly manifested in this, that not in a solitary instance have they dared to lift the veil, and present this doctrine *as it is*, and the arguments by which it is sustained as actually presented by its advocates, and then attempt to demonstrate the

non-truth or dangerous tendency of the doctrine itself, or the invalidity of the arguments by which it is really sustained.

9. We may now understand what a state of entire sanctification is. It implies the perfect assimilation of our entire moral character to the moral character of Christ ; a state in which the Christian "with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

10. We see how it is, that faith in Christ tends, in exact proportion to its implicitness, to induce a state of entire sanctification, or a perfect assimilation of our entire moral character to that of Christ. Such an assimilation of character is the natural and necessary result of faith, whatever the character of its object may be. When Mahomet, for example, had gained the implicit faith or confidence of his followers, he had brought them into such a relation to himself, that their entire moral character was transformed into a perfect likeness to his own. So when Christ becomes the object of similar confidence or faith, the natural and necessary consequence of a revelation of his glory to the mind then is a transformation of its entire moral character into the same "image from glory to glory." Nor is such transformation possible, in heaven or earth, on any other condition. Faith, in all worlds, and in respect to every creature, is the sole condition of the possession of a moral character like God.

11. We see how it is, that faith, while it is in itself a right exercise of mind, is still the necessary condition of a state of entire sanctification. I have been not a little surprised at the numerous objections which have recently been made to the doctrine of sanctification by faith ; especially, when I have considered the sources from which they came. The sum of these objections is this—"Faith, all admit to be in itself a right or holy exercise of mind, and yet it is made the condition of sanctification, and implicit faith the condition of entire sanctification. What is this but making not only holiness a condition of holiness, but perfect holiness the condition of perfect holiness?"—To this objection I reply :

(1.) The Bible, while it presents faith as in itself a right exercise of mind, also positively teaches the doctrine of sanctification by faith. "Purifying their hearts by faith." Now faith, and the pure heart which results from it, must in some sense be different things.

(2.) This objection lies, in all its force, against other teachings of inspiration, as well as against the doctrine under consideration. For example, in Deut. xxx. 1—6, God promises to "circumcise the hearts of his people and the heart of their seed, to love Him with all their heart and with all their soul," on condition, that they seek the Lord and obey his voice "with all their heart and with all their soul." The Psalmist also prays, that God will "create in him a clean heart." His prayer, if put up in faith, was a right exercise, and if in implicit

faith, as it doubtless was, wholly so. Yet the Psalmist evidently considered such prayer, put up in faith, as the condition of the possession of a pure heart. Who does not see that the above objection lies with equal weight against all such cases as these found in the Bible ; cases too numerous to be mentioned ? Now an objection which charges absurdity upon the Bible is, in my estimation, lighter than vanity.

(3.) While implicit faith is in itself purely a right exercise of mind, and consequently a part of a state of entire sanctification, it is not the whole of it. As a part to the whole, it is a necessary condition of the existence of the whole. An angel, for example, knows, that perfection in him consists and must for ever consist in a perfect resemblance of moral character to that of God. He may also, and doubtless does know, that in order to possess this likeness, that he may be continually "changed from glory to glory," into brighter and brighter resemblances to God, he must continually trust in God for that divine influence, that revelation of the divine glory to his mind, which will secure that result. Now that confidence or faith in God, which secures this divine influence, is one thing ; the possession of this bright and perfect resemblance to God, consequent on the reception of this influence is another thing. The latter is perfection. The former, though in itself purely a right exercise of mind, is a necessary condition of perfection in this higher sense. Thus, I suppose, that the perfection, glory, and blessedness of heaven itself are, and for ever will be suspended upon one principle, FAITH IN GOD. Let us now contemplate the condition of the saint on earth. "Blessed," says Christ, "are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled." A Christian may know, that he does not now possess the perfect moral rectitude required of him. And while he desires this state, and would prefer it to all other possessions conceivable, he may know, that by no efforts of his own, unaided and uninfluenced by the grace of Christ, he shall ever attain to this state. At the same time he may know, that Christ is able and willing to impart to him that influence, by which he may "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Under the influence of these convictions and desires, he may with "strong crying and tears," and with implicit confidence in the power and faithfulness of Christ, look to him for the influence necessary to an entire emancipation from the power of sin, and a perfect renewal in the image of Christ. Now this implicit faith in Christ, which is in itself purely a right exercise, this looking to him is one thing. The transformation of the entire moral being into his likeness, consequent on the reception of such influence, is another thing. But this last is entire sanctification, and is, as we have seen, conditioned on implicit faith in Christ for its production.

12. Thus we see that the doctrine of sanctification by faith is as plain a principle of philosophy and common sense, as of the Bible. However metaphysicians may embarrass themselves with it, one thing is certain—the experienced believer, whether he be a divine, a philosopher, a child, or a peasant, finds no difficulties connected with it, either theoretical or practical. In both these respects, he finds it a glorious reality. “I found,” said a young Christian in B., “that I could not retain the presence and peace of Christ as I went out into the world. In spite of all my resolutions and efforts, my temper would gain the advantage over me. I carried my difficulties to my minister. He told me, that I must govern my temper, and not yield to temptation. I renewed my resolutions and efforts, but in vain, and fell into a state of almost blank despair. In this state, I heard a brother preach, who illustrated the doctrine of sanctification by faith. He told me to cease trusting to my own resolutions and efforts, and in simple, implicit faith, to carry my temper, my appetites, and all my propensities to Christ, to have them subdued and brought into subjection to his will. I did so, and now, blessed be God, I find it perfectly easy to govern my temper, and to retain the presence and peace of Christ, at all times and under all circumstances.”

Christian, if this doctrine has not become a blessed reality in your experience, you have need to go back, and re-learn the first step in holy living.

13. We may understand what are the two great pillars of the gospel scheme of redemption. They are the doctrines of *justification* and of *sanctification* by faith in our incarnate God and Saviour.

14. We may also understand the grand mistake of the great mass of evangelical Christians. It is retaining, as they ought, the doctrine, perfectly fundamental, of justification by faith, and overlooking the doctrine, equally fundamental, of sanctification by faith. When I say that the Church has fallen into this mistake, “I speak that which I do know, and testify that which I have seen,” and which every one acquainted with her spiritual history also knows. The natural and necessary result of this mistake, is two forms of error, each almost equally fatal to vital godliness:

(1.) Antinomianism, which looks to Christ for redemption in sin, and not from it.

(2.) Legalism, which expects justification and sanctification both through deeds of law; or justification by faith, and sanctification mainly through her own efforts.

Hence, the two great classes which divide the mass of the Church. Those possessed of little or no spirituality, are slumbering in a kind of Antinomian death; while the most spiritual part are struggling in legal bondage, and by dint of resolution, continually renewed, and as continually broken, against the overwhelming current of carnal and

worldly propensities. In this fruitless struggle, the despairing cry is echoed, and re-echoed, from one to another—"O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Look, how we grovel here below!

Fond of these trifling toys;

Our souls can neither fly nor go,

To reach eternal joys."

"Where is the blessedness I knew

When first I saw the Lord?"

Here let me add, that with the views of the gospel commonly entertained, redemption from this thick and impenetrable gloom is an impossibility.

15. We see what is the great truth of which the Church now needs, above all others, to be put in full and complete possession. It is the doctrine of sanctification by faith, together with all the privileges involved in that doctrine. In the doctrine of justification by faith, she is already "rooted and grounded." When she shall become as fully "rooted and grounded" in the other great and fundamental principle of Christianity, when she shall arise to a full apprehension of her privileges in Christ, not only as a justifying, but also as a sanctifying Saviour, then the time of her deliverance has come. Then will she be lifted out of the hopeless bondage, cheerless gloom, and comfortless wretchedness, described in the 7th of Romans, which she, in her blindness and ignorance, has mapped out as the brightest form of Christian experience to be hoped for on earth; into the glorious liberty of the children of God, described in the 8th. Then shall she "mount up on wings as eagles; she shall run and not be weary, and she shall walk and not faint." Then shall her "righteousness go forth as brightness," and her "salvation as a lamp that burneth." "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." "The Lord hath not forsaken thee, thy Lord hath not forgotten thee." "He hath graven thee upon the palms of his hands; thy walls are continually before Him." "He will yet lay thy stones with fair colors, and thy foundations with sapphires." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established, thou shalt be far from oppression."

16. We are now prepared to contemplate the doctrine of entire sanctification as contrasted with the opposite doctrine. The great business of the advocates of this doctrine, the doctrine of Perfect Holiness, is to convince the Church, that in having "become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that she might be married to another, even to Him that is risen from the dead," it is her privilege as well as duty to "reckon herself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through

Jesus Christ our Lord ;" that in her union with Christ as a "quickening spirit," she is authorized to expect to be "redeemed from all iniquity," and to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Blessed employment, truly. Well might the Apostle with adoring gratitude exclaim, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." On the other hand the exclusive business of the opposers of this doctrine, so far as such opposition is concerned, is to persuade the Church, that from nothing to be discovered in her blessed Lord and Redeemer, from nothing to be hoped for from the Spirit of God, from nothing to be found in the provisions of divine grace for the sanctification of believers, or in the exceeding great and precious promises, given for the express purpose, that, "by these she might be a partaker of the divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust," from nothing to be anticipated from any one, or from all these combined, is she authorized to expect any such redemption in this life. These are the "good tidings of great joy" which it is their business to announce to Zion. And what will Zion gain if she receives their message as the truth of God? If she has little or no spirituality, she will be drawn down by it into antinomian death. If she is in a state of intense "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," she will be covered by it with mourning, lamentation, and woe. She will never dare to proclaim it to the world, that in Christ she is "complete."

17. Finally, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter."—We, Christians, "have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Let us lift our contemplation to the glory and perfection of Him to whom we are thus united, to the purposes for which he "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," and for which in his infinite love to the Church, he "gave himself for it,"—let us survey the boundless provisions of his grace for our redemption, and the "exceeding great and precious promises," that he has hung all around us, that by them, "we might be partakers of the divine nature,"—let us contemplate the purposes of our sacred calling, and the glory of that everlasting kingdom for which he is preparing us,—let us, in short, seek to be "strengthened with might in the inner man," by the Spirit of God, that we "comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," and then ask ourselves, "What sort of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."—*Oberlin Evangelist*.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

REFLECTIONS ON READING THE GUIDE.

DEAR BROTHER MERRITT,—After completing the perusal of the last number of the Guide, I found myself turned around to my port folio, lying on the table, and pouring forth my thoughts and feelings as follows. If they are deemed worthy your notice, and can be promotive of any good, they are at your disposal.

Dear Br. M., I love the Guide. Its messages are cheering and supporting. There is no monthly visitor I hail with greater joy. To the heart striving to enter into *rest*, I know of no periodical better calculated to render aid. It brings delineations of the experience of those who have discovered that there were higher attainments to be made, in *this* life, after justification ; and that *they* could not rest until pure within. Accounts of the exercise of mind, and struggle of soul with which they have proceeded ; of the discovery of the fact, that, notwithstanding all their efforts and sorrowing, it was by *simple faith*, a yielding of the entire soul and body, *now* and *for ever*, on the atonement of Jesus,—this devoted messenger has brought to the inquiring mind and panting heart. With what avidity these accounts have been seized, with what interest the peculiar exercises of mind and heart have been examined, those who have been seeking for such instructions can best declare. While, under the blessing of Heaven, it has shed its light along the pathway of the *seeking* soul, how has it rejoiced the heart already bounding with the love of God, or sweetly and confidently reposing on the bosom of its Saviour ! Not being exempt from temptations and trials severe, the heart of the perfect Christian has been encouraged in knowing that “*faith in God*” is a sure defence ; that Jesus neither leaves nor forsakes his faithful and devoted followers.

Dear Br., permit me to say, I feel the delightful inflowings of that stream whose source is the bosom of Jesus. I believe in the doctrine of *perfect love*. The *will* of God is our *sanctification*. This I believe to be *His* greatest pleasure. Why not ? If, when man came forth from the hand of his Creator, pure and perfect, bearing the moral image of his God, he was pronounced the *crowning* work, and, as such, was declared to be good, how is it not the greatest pleasure in the Deity to restore him (having fallen) to perfect union and communion with himself, since it is made in perfect consistency with the character of the Most High ? Mysterious, wondrous love ! God *can* be just, and yet the justifier (yea, *sanctifier*) of rebellious man ! Restored to holy and delightful communion with the skies, man is best able to explore the regions of benevolence, science, and nature. True, it is not expected that while he is perfect in *love*, he is, or will be, in

his present sphere, free from errors of judgment, or from imperfections of intellect. But it is a truth, established by illustrious examples, that while the heart is pure and completely yielded to its God, the intellectual, as well as the moral powers, are clearer, more efficient and successful in their action upon any subject brought for their contemplation, than otherwise they possibly can be.

Does the devoted Christian direct his attention to the attributes of the Deity,—he is able to hold himself in steady gaze, witnessing their perfect harmony, purity, and out-beaming splendor. Nor does he long view them, ere the deep of his soul heaves with emotions of love, inducing him to break forth in strains of wondrous and adoring praise. He falls, and at the sacred shrine worships the Infinite and Eternal.

Does he wish to discover the relation he sustains to his God and his fellows,—this he is enabled the more readily and accurately to accomplish. He feels at once and *forcibly*, the obligations arising therefrom. With promptness and success he meets them. Viewing God as his creator, preserver, redeemer, and benefactor, he renders his *first* and *best* services to him.

Is man his fellow, created by the same being, possessed of similar similar powers and susceptibilities with himself, and having connected with him similar destinies,—he feels that he should *love* him, and *labor* for his good. In a word he surveys at once the great and wise plan of the Deity, and feels, most fully, the design of his existence.

Would he enter the fields of science,—religion, pure and undefiled, is his best companion. Her countenance, always peaceful, yet lit up with celestial radiance, beams upon and cheers him in his course. She sheds her illuminations upon truths, otherwise but dimly seen. She teaches him that all *true sciences* are but so many rays emanating from the original source of truth and light; and that the contemplation of one of the most profound, engaged no less than the attention and study of the devout Psalmist of Israel, inducing him to exclaim, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Like the patriarch of old, goes he forth into the fields to meditate,—he everywhere beholds the displays of wisdom, skill, and power, wondrous and divine. Not a spire of grass at his feet, not a fluttering leaf of the orchard or the forest, nor a blushing flower of the lawn, but exhibits to him some trace of a supernal hand. His heart, attuned to the Almighty's praise, chimes in with universal nature, in its deep and continuous anthems. Demonstrations, on every hand, appear, *that there is a God*; and that he is the source of being, life, and felicity. These externals are but so many confirmatory evidences of the one, the *undoubted one*, he has in his own bosom.

While thus the deeply-devoted person is aided in his intellectual

and moral investigations, he is especially successful and happy in his seasons of devotion, retired and alone. Let us witness him perusing the *precious volume*, the man of his counsel and guide of his feet; witness him in his devotions. Perchance he opens and commences the 17th chap. of St. John. In the first verse, even, he reads a *volume*! He sees the immaculate Jesus as he lifts "up his eyes to Heaven," and says, "Father, the hour is come;" the hour of my suffering is approaching! His heart melts into holy sympathy; his tears almost flow at the exhibition of the Saviour's perfect resignation. How it teaches him to address the Deity! How it tells him to be submissive and implicit in his trust! He reads along, but finds no difficulty in the second, since he knows that the Father has given to the Son "*as many*" as will accept the terms of the gospel. He *knows* that whosoever *will*, *may* come and receive "eternal life." *He* feels that it is "eternal life" to know the Father, "the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ," whom He has sent.

As he stops a moment and casts a hasty glance over the life of the Saviour, he feels the *force* of his *example*; and is conscious that his was a life *emphatically* of meekness, kindness, activity, and love; and now, that he is, praying the Father to glorify him with the glory which he had with him before the world was—glorify him while he shall pass from the garden of Gethsemane (to which he was going) into the hands of his enemies, and thence to expire on Calvary, for the redemption of the world—glorify him in keeping his disciples from the evils to which they would be exposed in promulgating the gospel they had embraced—how his devoted soul melts into union with the Saviour! But we will not be too minute. He sees how intently and expressly the Saviour pleads for his disciples immediately present. But now he reads, "sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." It attracts his attention, and fastens his eye. "*Sanctify them.*" This is the Saviour's prayer. This he prayed in reference to the disciples then present. This, also, he prays for *me*, for he says, "Neither pray I for these alone, (the disciples present,) but for those, also, which shall believe on me through their word." He continues, "Sanctify them, that they may be unspeakably happy, and triumphantly successful, in spreading the Gospel and doing good to men? Oh, blessed Jesus, while thou didst pray for them, thou alone pleadest for *me*. I have embraced this holy doctrine: the flame *is* burning in my bosom. Thou, holy Saviour, dost save to the uttermost. I *do* love my neighbor as myself. I *do* love the Saviour with *all* my mind, might and strength. I *feel* that, through his confirming and abounding grace, I *may* be with him where he is, and 'share in his glory.' Oh, *that* glory! the foretaste is mine." He has completed its perusal. He exclaims, "Blessed chapter; what food to my soul! I do feel the blessedness of a free and a full salvation. I cannot doubt

these sacred truths. What is the world to me? 'tis but a fleeting show; soon 'twill pass away, but my home is in the skies,

' My portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there.' "

He ceases a moment from his exulting thoughts. With the profoundest reverence bows before the Most High. Nor does he ascend up into heaven, nor descend into the deep; the Saviour is there: he gazes upon the object of his faith. Through Jesus he looks upon the throne eternal, and beholds the Father reconciled. The Father, smiling, sees his pure, his perfect image, in the suppliant's bosom. He needs but ask, he receives: he needs but open his mouth, it is filled. He drinks and drinks again; the cup o'erflows. Oh, the fountain, how sweet its waters, how exhaustless! Enough for each, for *all*, enough *for evermore*. His tears of holy joy, his deep and hallowed praise, tell of his exalted communion. His language is,

"My willing soul would stay,
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away,
To everlasting bliss."

But other duties call. Forth he goes. Like the countenance of Moses, *his* beams with unearthly radiance. Its hallowed beauty is seen by those with whom he mingles. His is a little heaven within, and a demonstration of its truth without. The will of God is his delight. Whatever his hands find to do he does with his might. His love to God is supreme, while he loves his neighbor as himself. He lives not to himself, knowing he is not his own, being bought with a price.

Middletown, Conn., Aug. 18, 1840.

I. J.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"Then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land, whither they went."

The wind blows, and the sea roars; the soul is driven of fierce winds and tossed; we row hard, and toil night and day, but come not to land. Jesus enters the ship, we are safe; we have reached the shore, our feet are planted on a rock. *All, all is in vain without Christ in the soul.*

"My Sheep hear my voice."

It is the voice of my Beloved that speaks; he speaks in the sweet accents of love. He calls me away from the world; its riches, its

honors, its pleasures, for they can never satisfy my soul. He calls me to forsake myself, and every arm of flesh, and trust to his Almighty Arm, which is able to save to the uttermost of my immortal soul's desires. I hear, and I obey. Under the shadow of his wing I trust, I listen to the whispers of his mercy, calling me to glory, honor, immortality and eternal blessedness.

"Draw me, I will run after Thee."

Since thou hast thrown around me thy chain of love, and bound me to thyself, most gladly do I forsake all and follow thee. Thy love is better than all things else. Angels feed on it, thy presence makes their joy. Give me thy love, draw me to thyself, and I ask nothing more. O Jesus, when we have thee, we have bliss, we have glory. Welcome, then, to my heart. Come in, come in, thou King of glory. Blessedness and peace follow in the train of thy footsteps; the chains of sin fall off, and I am free indeed. I bid every sinful emotion to depart for ever. O make this heart thy temple; reign there, and reign for ever, the light and life of my soul. Adieu, ye riches, honors, and pleasures of the world. Long have I fed on these husks, and starved my soul. But in thy love, my soul is satisfied, I ask nothing more. O Jesus, I am thine. I see thee travelling in the depths of thine agony to redeem my soul. Yes, I am thine. I would not be my own. I would extinguish self and live to thee.

Seeing Jesus.

I count above all price the sight of Jesus. To gaze at Him, I close my eyes to every other object. And with a single eye I see his glory. It is the glory of condescension, of mercy to the guiltiest, that fixes my eye, and engages my heart; glory adapted to man's necessities. Yes, I will look at Jesus, until the plan of his mercy is accomplished in me; until by beholding him I am changed from my own sinful nature, into his glorious image. O for a constant sight of Jesus. O to reflect his image in every act, and word, and look; his inward image in the eye of God, his purity of heart. I would be pure, as he is pure. Then shall I see him, as it were, with open face, and be changed into the same image, as from glory to glory.

*"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"
"Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow me, for whosoever will save his life, shall lose it."*

At the point where we lose ourselves, or crucify self, we find our life, we find Jesus. In self crucifixion, carried out to the full extent of our Saviour's meaning, we find the blessedness of being nothing ourselves, because Christ is all in all to the soul. It is then we *glory* in the cross, for by the cross we have gained the life of Jesus. *The life of*

Jesus in the soul! What words can express the blessedness of such a state. Weary pilgrim, tossed upon the sea of thine own stormy passions and carnal reasonings, submit to the cross, study the cross, and learn what it is to be crucified with Christ, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in thy soul. As from the death of the natural body, a more glorious and spiritual body is raised, so from the death of the carnal life, springs up a spiritual life—a life in Jesus.

"He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The sun always shines, though clouds sometimes intercept the brightness of his rays; so with Jesus, the splendor of his presence may be withdrawn, yet the mild radiance of his beams is ever diffused, and nought but closing the eye of faith can shut out the light of his countenance. There is a flower that follows always the sun; its going down, and its rising up, and its noonday height; through clouds and storms, it bends toward the sun. Thus should the eye of faith always be directed to Jesus. Disciple of Jesus, never fear, although the winds arise and the clouds gather blackness, and the tempest beats upon thy soul, thou art secure. Jesus is behind the storm. His unseen hand is stretched out still. Seize it and hold on. This may be Elijah's whirlwind to carry thee to Heaven. Thy soul may mount higher than ever before, from this exercise of faith. Faith sees light in darkness, and brightness in obscurity. As the needle to the pole, let thine eye always turn to Jesus, and the darkness will be light about thee.

"His name is Jesus, to save his people from their sins."

O Christian, write it on thy heart, bind it on thy hand, let it be as frontlets between thine eyes. At all times remember it. *His name is Jesus, to save his people from their sins.* It stands so enrolled on the pages of inspiration; it cannot be blotted out; unbelief may make it of no avail, but it stands in all its beauty, in all its glory. *His name is Jesus.* It is written on my heart. I see, I feel its beauty. Glory to God in the highest, for Jesus, a Saviour, a present Saviour, a Saviour from sin.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXPERIENCE OF C. W.

DEAR BROTHER,—It is with a peculiar pleasure I have of late perused the Guide. For in that I find many witnesses of Perfect Love who coincide with the sentiment of my heart. I love the subject of Christian Holiness. It is one that first charmed my heart

after I had embraced the truths of the Gospel, and my sins were pardoned. It was twenty years ago, in the town of B. I then frequently heard the older Christians talk of some at a distance, professing Christian Holiness, but none among us seemed to have confidence enough to say God had cleansed them from all sin, and filled them with perfect love. My heart frequently panted after this blessing. Although I was young in years and experience, yet my soul would hunger and thirst for full salvation. I would weep and fast and pray. I obtained some books on the subject, but after all I could do, I was still afflicted with a corrupt heart of unbelief, departing from God. I attended a camp meeting in 1821; the precious doctrine was held up in the preaching of the Gospel, and I saw it was for me, but could not believe; and when I left the consecrated ground, my whole soul was burdened to be made clean through the word. I then came to a resolution that I would set apart some of my time especially to seek this blessing. I did so for many days; at length it was suggested by the Devil that, As your older brethren do not profess it, you cannot live it, if you obtain it. And thus I was overcome by temptation, and fainted in my faith and progress; sunk down, and concluded to enjoy all I could in a justified state, and hoped one day or other to be cleansed from sin. I had almost come to the conclusion not to attend another camp-meeting. I thought, they may benefit others, but concluded they did me little or no good. Therefore I did not attend one again until 1824. I then lived in a justified state, and could lead my class as far as I felt and knew the power of grace, but I still felt the need of the blood of sprinkling to wash away all the corruptions of my carnal mind, and to make me clean through the blood of the atonement of Christ. I could see the ocean of God's love, but could not plunge into the fullness.

At length it was convenient for me to attend the above camp-meeting. I went praying that God would let my soul into the true liberty of the sons of God. The Lord was with us of a truth, and the light of the pure Gospel shone so clear, when it was spoken by one of our aged fathers, it was truly like a magnifying mirror; it discovered sins in my heart which I little thought remained there; the sin of pride and love of the world, unholiness, unbelief, in contrast with a holy law, and a holy God, that condemned them. I sunk down and cried, My uncleanness, my uncleanness; it was then I felt my unworthy nothingness, and Christ washed all my pollutions away, and sealed me his with his own blood. I at once arose from my knees, and declared what God had done for my soul. There was a sacred holy awe and atmosphere surrounded me. My soul was full of God, and so was every branch of the trees; and every sound in the air seemed to me to say, Glory to God. This world was then turned into a paradise to me. I dwelt in God, I dwelt in love, and O

how near the throne of grace. Thus it was only to look and live, ask and receive, and all was mine by promise.

To use a comparison, the change was as sensible to my spiritual vision, as it would be to enter from a *mine* of darkness into a room filled with light. I felt as a little child who lies in his father's arms, and with all the confidence of a child I could say, not mine but thy will be done. That was 16 years ago, and I feel the holy flame of perfect love to God and man burning in my soul to-day. It is true there has been some days of darkness over my soul, in consequence of temptations and unbelief; but most of the time I have felt to cry *Abba, Father*, and in my darkest hour I could look back on that sacred spot where my Ebenezer was raised, and never doubted but God sanctified my soul through the Son of his love. And as God has kept me, he can keep and preserve others in the same blessing. None need fear to embrace all the fullness in Christ, for he is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption.

We then shall cease from our own works, as God did from his. What work he gives us to do we shall do with cheerfulness and delight, then hand it back to him, with all the glory too, and then say, Lord what more shall I do, that I may glorify thee. It is now my greatest desire and prayer to see the whole Christian church arise and shine, for the light has come, and the glory of the Lord shines upon her.

C. W.

New Bedford, Sept. 11, 1840.

EXTRACT

Of a letter from a Preacher who experienced the blessing of perfect love at the Eastham Camp-meeting. We presume it was not designed for publication; but we trust Br. S. will excuse us for inserting it.

The work of holiness is going forward here; souls are getting baptized with the Holy Ghost, sanctified, i. e., emptied of sin and filled with righteousness. Glory to God in the highest, free from sin, filled with grace, power and glory, is my theme. Go on with your Guide, and fill it up with the glory of *entire* sanctification: it will open the way for such reformatations as the world never saw. O, I would that the whole Church might get their eyes open, and come up to the standard, and not try to bring the standard to them. More another time.

Yours, in the bonds of sanctified love,

A. D. SARGEANT.

*For the Guide to Christian Perfection.***MAN'S SPIRIT HATH AN UPWARD LOOK.**

Man's spirit hath an upward look,
 And robes itself with heavenly wings,
 E'en when 'tis here compelled to brook
 Confinement to terrestrial things.

Its eye is fastened on the skies,
 Its wings for flight are opened wide ;
 Why doth it hesitate to rise,
 And still upon the earth abide ?

And wouldst thou seek the cause to know,
 And never more its course repress ?
 Then from those wings their burden throw,
 And set them free from worldliness.

Shake off the worldly cares that stay
 Their energy and upward flight,
 And thou shalt see them make their way
 To joy and liberty and light.

THE SECRET SIGN.

They know Him by the secret sign,
 Which to their souls is given ;
 'Tis written there in light divine,
 With characters from Heaven.

They may not tell it, but 'tis true,
 For ever deep impressed ;
 Nor grief, nor pain, nor sharp despair,
 Shall rend it from their breast.

The child the parent's accent knows,
 The accents ever dear ;
 Unlike the treacherous voice of foes,
 That fills his heart with fear.

He runs to meet it, and it falls
 In blessings and in joys ;
 And thus, when'er the Saviour calls,
 His people know his voice.

They know Him by the secret sign,
 Which to their souls is given ;
 'Tis written there in light divine,
 With characters from Heaven.

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

DECEMBER, 1840.

NO. 6.

LETTER

BY REV. CHARLES FITCH TO A BROTHER CLERGYMAN.

Brother F. has kindly furnished the following for the Guide. We commend it to our readers. It will be a feast to them. We have no occasion to apologize for *such* long communications.

Newark, Oct., 1840.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Since the interview I had with you the other day, on board the steamboat, I have had a very great desire to tell you more than I then had opportunity to do, of my feelings, and of the dealings of our Blessed Saviour with me in the manifestations of his love. The manner of that interview affected me exceedingly, opening a fountain of tenderness in my heart, which, in spite of me, would have an outlet at my eyes, for a considerable time after you left me, and which gushes still as often as I think of you. Of late, I find but few among those who once regarded me as a brother in Christ, who are now willing to manifest confidence in me as such, and when one of them now addresses me, as you did, from a heart which I could not but see had been melted to tenderness by the love of Christ, I feel instantly that, if permitted, I could bury my face in his bosom and weep; not because I am unhappy, for I feel that He, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, has done, and is doing, all that an infinity of love, and wisdom, and power can do, to complete and perpetuate my fulness of joy in Him: but because my heart runs over, whenever I meet any one in whom I see, as I did see in yourself, a manifestation of the spirit of my blessed Saviour. And now, my dear brother, (for my heart, which even now unlocks its fountain of tears as I write, will not allow me to address you by any other title, although I stand before the world as a wanderer from the right ways of the Lord,) will you permit me to spread out before you, as the Lord shall enable me, some of those conceptions of the

truth, which have led me to adopt, and which seem to me to be confirming me more and more in the opinions, for the publication of which I am regarded by my brethren as unsound in the faith.

I find in the fourth chapter of John's 1st epistle, at the 16th and 17th verses, the following declarations: "And we have *known* and *believed* the love that God hath to us. God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world." I also find the following in the third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. "For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you *according to the riches of his glory*, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; *that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith*; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, *and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, that ye might be *filled with all the fullness of God*. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen."

After such expressions as these respecting the love of Christ, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" It seems to me now, in view of such expressions as these, that the greatest injury or dishonor I can do my Saviour, is to doubt his love to me, or to refuse to know and believe it; and it seems to me that I am infinitely removed from all possible danger of having *too enlarged conceptions* of the love of Christ toward me, or of what he, in the exercise of that love, is willing to do for me, in any thing that would truly promote my good. I seem to myself, when attempting to present the love of Christ to men, after having done all I can to enlarge and amplify my own views and those of others, on such a theme, to stand as though holding a single drop of water upon my finger's end, for the purpose of describing the Pacific ocean. I could say it is like this drop of water, but it is ten thousand miles in extent, and too deep to be fathomed. So, after all, I can say of the love of Christ, and after the most enlarged conceptions of it which my little mind can possibly encompass, I seem to myself to be looking at, and holding up to the sight of others, but a single drop from an ocean which has neither bottom nor shore; for, after stretching our thoughts to the utmost, to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, it is still the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Such, doubtless,

it will continue to be through eternity ; and though our power may eternally expand to broader breadths, and reach to farther lengths, and plunge to deeper depths, and tower to loftier heights, we shall but be going on to know and comprehend, with all the saints, the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. I feel, therefore, that I am at an infinite distance from all danger of exaggerating the love of Christ, or forming too enlarged conceptions of what my Redeemer, in the exercise of that love, is ready to do for me.

Now, my dear brother, I am taught in the Bible, that the "divine power of God hath given unto us *all things* that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." I also read that the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who has been preached unto us, "is not yea and nay, but in him is yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." By which I understand, that the Lord Jesus Christ is faithful in fulfilling to us every promise of God's grace, for the fulfillment of which we will acknowledge our dependence on him, and exercise faith in him. When we thus trust in Christ for the fulfillment of these promises, he will show us his faithfulness in their fulfillment, and for that faithfulness we shall praise him, and thereby glorify him ; for it is written, "Whoso offereth praise, glorifyeth me ; and thus all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." It cannot be, then, my brother, that my conceptions of the love of Christ have exceeded the reality, when I regard him as loving me sufficiently to fulfill in me all the "exceeding great and precious promises which were given me, that I might be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." I do believe, my brother, that my Saviour loves me well enough certainly to fulfil in me all these promises, when I confide in his love for it. We read that "Sarah received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, *because she judged him faithful that had promised.*" Now if I judge him faithful who hath promised that if I confess my sins "he is faithful and just to forgive my sins, *and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness,*" shall I find him faithful ? or do I exaggerate his love toward me, when I believe that he loves me well enough to do for me just what he has promised to do ? I am told that God has covenanted and sworn, and raised up Christ a horn of salvation to fulfil the covenant and oath, that he will grant unto me, "that I being delivered out of the hands of my enemies, may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of my life." Now do my conceptions of the love of Christ exceed the reality, when

I confide in his love to do all this for me? Have my apprehensions of that love of Christ which passeth knowledge, so soon spanned a breadth that is illimitable, and outreached a length which knows no bound, and sounded a depth which is fathomless, and overtopped a height which has no summit? Besides, how do I treat my Saviour, when I will not regard him as true to his own covenant and oath? He said at the institution of the supper, "This is the New Testament in my blood." By a covenant in blood, I understand something like the following: A friend, in circumstances of great interest and solemnity, wishing to give another the strongest possible pledge of changeless fidelity, opens a vein, and dips his pen in his own blood, and writes out a covenant, and presents this as the strongest possible testimonial of his plighted faith. Now God has said, "This is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. I will bring forth out of Zion the Deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Jeremiah, also, and Paul, to the Hebrews, speak of a new covenant, in which God has promised to put his love into the hearts of his people, and write it in their minds. Of this new covenant, Christ is called the Mediator and Surety. His ministers are called ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter that killeth, but of the spirit that giveth life. It seems to me, that God has covenanted to take away our sins by putting his law into our hearts and writing it in our minds,—thus circumcising our hearts to love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul, that we may live: sprinkling clean water upon us and making us clean, from *all* our filthiness and all our idols cleansing us; causing our sins, which were as scarlet and crimson, to become as snow and wool: thoroughly purging our dross, and taking away our tin; causing that we defile ourselves no more with our idols, nor with our detestable things, nor with any of our transgressions, but saving us out of all our dwelling places, wherein we have sinned; and cleansing us, that so we may be his people, and he be our God; loving us, and giving himself for us, that he may sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water by the word, and present us unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that we should be holy and without blemish; promising to dwell in, and walk in us, that we, having these promises, may cleanse ourselves from "*all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*"

Now no one will deny that, if Christ should fulfil his own promises in me, I should be cleansed from all unrighteousness. And it seems to me, that to fulfil these new covenant promises, was the very purpose for which he came, and that, in pledge of changeless and eternal fidelity to this covenant, that he will take away our sins. He has poured out all his blood on the cross—thus giving us a covenant, a New Testament, in blood, and encouraging us to rely on his own faith thus

plighted, that he will cleanse us from all unrighteousness: covenanting with us, and swearing to us, that he will grant unto us "that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life."

The case, then, in my view, is this: Christ has come to make atonement for us; the design of which is explained by God to Moses, when he said, "The priest shall make atonement for you, to *cleanse* you, that ye may be *clean* from *all* your sins *before* the Lord." "How much more, then, shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" "But now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." God then has covenanted to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Christ has pledged himself to fulfil the covenant, and given me that pledge in his own heart's blood,—the strongest possible seal or evidence of changeless fidelity to his own plighted faith,—and this covenant and oath he is pledged to fulfil to me, not when I die, but "all the days of my life." Shall I now say, Lord Jesus, I believe thy love and confide in it, and henceforth rely on thy faithfulness, pledged in the last drop of thine own heart's blood, that thou wilt preserve my whole spirit, and soul, and body, blameless to thy coming? or shall I say, I dare not believe that my Saviour loves me well enough to do this for me, and that the pledge of his own heart's blood of faithfulness to this covenant is not a pledge on which I dare rely? Can I thus treat my blessed Saviour, who shed his blood for me, as though his own plighted faith, his covenant in blood, was not worthy of being trusted? It seems to me, my brother, that I could not be guilty of a greater sin, than thus to doubt my Redeemer's love; and there is no view of that love that so melts my heart, and so prostrates me at the feet of my Saviour, to wash them with my tears and wipe them with the hairs of my head, and anoint them with the oil of my purest love, as when I look upon him as coming into the world and loving me so well as to be willing to pluck me from the dung-hill, and draw me forth from the very gutter of all my uncleanness, and cleanse me, until I am made fit for his love, receiving me to his own arms, and pillowing my entire being upon his own bosom, where I may continually feel the strong heavings, the mighty pulsations of his own infinite heart of love. He has assured me that they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing; and it seems to me that there is no good thing which my Saviour so delights to bestow, as to give me such a conformity to his own blessed image, that he can look upon me and say in his own language to his church, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." What is there within the compass of thought, which he can be so glorified in giving, or

I made so blessed in receiving? Shall I doubt his love? Is it not a love surpassing knowledge? Shall I dishonor it by saying that he does not love me well enough to do all this for me, and to do it now? My brother, I *must* not, I *dare* not, I *will* not, I cannot thus dishonor my own crucified Saviour, who has covenanted with me in his own heart's blood, to take away my sins. Blessed be his name, I have no desire thus to dishonor him. I have proved his power and faithfulness to cleanse from all unrighteousness, and I must bear witness to that faithfulness, though the world call me Beelzebub, as they called Him. His church is called the bride, the Lamb's wife. Suppose now that your own beloved wife, from whom you have received too many expressions of faithful affection even to doubt her love, should come to you on a day with her heart all panting with some strange anxiety, and her eyes gushing forth tears: she throws her arms around your neck, and hides her face in your bosom and weeps. At your earnest entreaty, she tells you that all her distress arises from a dreadful fear that has been awakened within her, that she may be overcome at some time by some powerful and unexpected temptation, and led into the commission of some act of dreadful unfaithfulness to the relation which she sustains to you. Again and again she assures you of her love, and tells you that with her present feelings, death would be far preferable to the doing of a deed so dreadful, and yet knowing the weakness of a fallen nature, and the strength and subtlety of temptation, she has no confidence in herself that she shall be able to overcome; and then entreats you by the love you bear her, by all the endearments of that most endearing of all earthly relations which you sustain to each other, to do all in your power to throw around her an influence that shall save her from the snare, into which, if left to herself, she so greatly fears that she may one day fall. Suppose now it were in your power to raise her and wipe away her tears, and smile upon her, and ever after show her, in yourself, a person and a character so lovely in her view, as to draw forth all her affections, and fix them upon yourself so strongly, that under every temptation which could possibly arise to any infidelity or unkindness toward you, every feeling of her heart would exclaim, how can I do such a wickedness, and sin against a husband so worthy of my love? And suppose you had it fully in your power to give her, by such a manifestation of your own character and love to her, an assurance that she should certainly be kept from every possible temptation that would at once allay all her fears, and fill her with perfect peace, so that her countenance, before so sad, should be lighted up with smiles of gladness, and her heart, so torn with anxiety and fear, be evermore filled, on that subject, with fulness of joy, would you hesitate to do this? Would not the happiness of your wife, and your own honor, be motives sufficiently powerful to lead you, at her entreaty, at once to

make such a manifestation of your own character to her view, as should raise her and keep her above the temptation which she should fear? You know, my brother, that there is nothing which you so much value in a wife, as the unsullied purity and changeless fidelity of her affection toward you. What better thing can you do to secure this, than to let her see in yourself, to the utmost of your power, every thing that is worthy of her love? Now Paul says to the Ephesians, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it: that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He might present it unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Now, brother, do you love your wife better than Christ loves his Church? And when you know that your heart would leap for joy to be able to fix her affections, with perfect and unchanging purity, upon yourself, by such a manifestation of yourself to her as should thus win and secure her love, have you come to exceed that love of Christ to his Church which passeth knowledge? Since Christ has loved his Church, and given himself for her perfect purity, as we have from the scripture thus quoted, will he not take an unspeakable pleasure in rendering her thus pure, whenever she will come to him and confide in him to that end?

Should a wife turn away from her husband, and shut her ears to the voice of his love, and throw herself into snares, it would be out of his power to win her, by any thing that he could show her of himself? So when the Church will turn away from her Redeemer, and "scatter her ways with strangers," it is not to be expected that he will purify her by the manifestations of his presence and love. But when any one of his people comes to him panting after righteousness, desiring, more than life, to be wholly conformed to his will, and to have a heart so filled and fixed with love to him, and to be made so blessed and happy in him, that all possible inducements to wander from him, even in thought, shall for ever lose their power, does not he, whose love for his blood-bought Church passeth knowledge, love that hungering, thirsting, panting soul sufficiently to make such a manifestation of his own glorious excellency as to fix all the affections of such an one upon himself, to an extent so entire and changeless, that all inducements to sin, either from the world or Satan, shall for ever lose their power? Is not Christ able to do all this for his people when they will come and trust in him for it; and if able, is he not ready and faithful? Does his power to bless them, when they will confide in him, ever exceed his love toward them? Did he not love the guilty ones of Jerusalem even beyond his power to do them good; and was he not affected even to tears, when he saw that the overflowing of his benevolence toward them never could be gratified, in consequence

of their refusing to come to him that they might have life? And now when his people come to him and hang upon him for the smiles of his love, and entreat him, with tears, that they may be redeemed from all iniquity, and be made holy and without blame before him in love; if he is able so to unveil his glory before their spiritual vision, as entirely to fix all their affections upon himself, and thus "sanctify them wholly, and preserve their whole spirit and soul and body blameless to his coming," is he not "faithful to do it?"

It is in this way, I believe, that he does sanctify his people. Christ said, in relation to the Holy Spirit, "He shall not speak of himself; *He shall glorify me*; He shall take of the things that are mine and show them unto you." It is thus he makes us to "behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, till we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of God." This I believe to be the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit toward God's people: so to take the unspeakable loveliness of Christ and show it unto them, as that their entire affections are effectually won to Christ. It is thus that he circumcises their hearts, to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, that they may live. It is thus that "He sprinkles clean water upon them," even the pure water of Christ's loveliness, "and makes them clean from *all their filthiness*; and from all their idols cleanses them." It is thus that "He promises to dwell in them and walk in them;" so that they, "having these promises, may cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

And now, dear brother, it is because I have learned so "to know and believe the love which Christ hath toward me," (taught, as I do believe, by the spirit of God,) that I have come to feel that he, in the exercise of that love which passeth knowledge, loves me well enough, notwithstanding all my unworthiness, so to manifest to me his glory by his own Holy Spirit, as to "take away my sins," and "grant unto me, that I, being delivered out of the hands of my enemies, may serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of my life." It is thus I believe that he enables me so to abide in him that I sin not. You know, my dear brother, how dear to you and me is the purity of those whom God has made bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. And since Christ has made us "members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones," as Paul tells the Church at Ephesus, does not he love our purity as much, and will not his love accomplish the whole, when by faith we commit our being into his hands for that purpose? Will he leave us in our impurity, when we look to him and say, like the leper, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make us clean?" Will he not put forth his hand and touch us, saying, "I will, be thou clean?" especially when he has said, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you and make you clean; from *all* your

filthiness and from *all* your idols will I cleanse you." "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with *any* of their transgressions. But I will save them out of all their dwelling places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them. So shall they be my people, and I will be their God?" He has covenanted and sworn to do this all the days of our life; and has raised up Christ, our horn of salvation, to fulfil the oath, and he has pledged his blood that it shall be done for all who will come and confide in him. I confess, my brother, that it looks to me like an amazing sin to doubt Christ's faithfulness and power and love on this subject. He said to his Father, the glory which thou gavest me, have I given them, that they may be one as we are, that the world may know that thou hast sent me. It was his glory to bruise the head of Satan completely under his feet, and to maintain a complete victory over the world as long as he was in it. He has given this glory to us, and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Nothing but unbelief can deprive us of this glory.

And now, my brother, I wish to offer a few thoughts, touching the particular points of which we conversed during the few moments which we spent together.

You remarked that you had had seasons of such deep and overpowering emotion under the manifestation of the presence and love of Christ, that you had felt like saying, Lord, it is enough; I can endure no more; but that you did not see that even then, it was possible for you to know that you were capable of no higher emotions of love to God than you did at such times actually feel; and therefore, though you were to feel the same strength of emotion continually, you would not be able to say that you did absolutely love God with all your heart.

You also asked whether I could be absolutely certain, in any season of joyous emotion (however interesting) which might be awakened by the manifestations of the love of Christ, that my being was absolutely incapable of sustaining any higher emotions? To which I replied in the negative. And now in relation to this, I wish to say a few things.

I suppose that our emotions are not strictly acts of the will. I am sure that it is not in our power to awaken or suppress them at pleasure. These emotions, I believe, in a heart truly alive to God, will be more or less intense, in proportion to the degree of vividness and glory of those manifestations of the loveliness of Christ which the Holy Spirit shall at the time make to the mind. These emotions may be such as to overpower the strength of the body. This was true, at times, as you are aware, of Mrs. Edwards. It was also true of Tennent, at a time when his people found him in a grove, during the intermission of public worship on a Sabbath, so overpowered by the

manifestations of God's presence as to be unable to stand, and was obliged to request them to carry him to his pulpit, where he prayed that the glory might be so far withdrawn as that he might have strength to address his congregation. Now it seems to me that a man can no more awaken or suppress such emotions at pleasure, than he can make a world. I believe that this is the work of the Holy Spirit, and that He only can accomplish it; and that these alone, are not all the evidences, to say the least, to which we are to look, when we would know whether we love God with all our hearts. I believe that the righteousness of the believer is the righteousness of faith; and that faith is regarded in the Bible as an act of the will, as when it is said, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." To this resolution of trusting in God is annexed the promise, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation, and shall say, praise the Lord; call upon his name; declare among the people his doings; make mention that his name is exalted." Now when a soul that has been truly hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and feeling that nothing short of full and perpetual conformity to the will of God can satisfy, looks into the exceeding great and precious promises of God, which were given that we might be partakers of the divine nature, "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," and sees that "Christ is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," when we come to him confessing our need and trusting in him, that "He was manifested to take away our sins," and that it is our privilege to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Christ," he is led by the Holy Spirit to trust in Christ for the fulfilment of these promises. As he looks upon Christ he says, "Behold Christ is my salvation from sin: I will trust and not be afraid." Christ accepts him, and sends the Holy Spirit to shed abroad in his heart the perfect love of God. He receives a glorious manifestation of the love of Christ. He finds unbelief taken away, the love of the world subdued, self crucified, and a most delightful consciousness that his heart is cleansed from the love of every object that is opposed to the will of God. Like Paul, he can say, "I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live here in the flesh, I live by the *faith of the Son of God*, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God, for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ were dead in vain." His whole being rests upon the faithfulness of Christ, that he shall be kept by him pure from all iniquity, by receiving the fulfilment of all those exceeding great and precious promises, in which such a redemption is so abundantly pledged. He

knows that he does not doubt or distrust his Saviour. His whole being is at rest in Christ. Thus he abides in Christ. He lives free from condemnation, and dwells in perfect peace with God. He finds his propensities subjugated to God's will. It is as meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father. He finds rest to his soul. By seasons the Holy Spirit so manifests Christ that his whole heart overflows, and his strength will scarce sustain him. His "cup runneth over." If these emotions were perpetual, he could neither eat nor sleep, nor preach the gospel; but in that state of sweet tranquillity which he enjoys at other times, he is in the best manner prepared to discharge all the duties, and meet all the trials, and overcome all the temptations of life. His peace is as a river, and his righteousness as the waves of the sea. He is abundantly satisfied with the fatness of God's house, and drinks continually of the river of his pleasures. God satisfies his longing soul, and fills his hungry soul with goodness. The objects which the men of this world aim at, are to him lighter than air, while it is perfect joy to him to devote his all to the honor of Christ and the salvation of a perishing world. Like Jeremiah, he finds God's word and eats it, and God's word is unto him the joy and rejoicing of his heart. In a spiritual sense—

"Remote from man, with God he spends his days,
Prayer all his business, all his pleasure praise."

He lives in the world for the everlasting good of the world, and not for his own gratification. While his faith in his Redeemer fails not, he fears no evil, is strong in the Lord and in the power of his might against all his spiritual foes, and is thus "delivered out of the hand of his enemies, and serves God *without fear* in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of his life." He knows the perfect love of God that casts out fear; for he that loveth dwelleth in God and God in him. This is what I regard as the perfection of Christian character on earth. It is by no means the perfection of heaven, but is that "obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" unto which we are called on earth: "In whom we also, after that we believe, are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the covenant of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory."

I trust, dear brother, you will receive this communication as the affectionate overflow toward you of a heart that is conscious of loving all who love the Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure that I should not have thought of thus addressing you, had it not been for the truly Christian-like manner in which you sought me out and found me, and expressed the feelings of your heart to me, on board the boat. My heart loves you for it, and ever will. May the Lord bless you and

yours with the richest effusions of his grace, with the richest enjoyment of our blessed Redeemer's love, until we are received to a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, to praise and enjoy God without intermission and without end.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

CHARLES FITCH.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

Lynn, October 7, 1840.

DEAR BR. KING,—The ardent desire I have to please God, as well as advance my own spiritual interests, and benefit others, may be a sufficient excuse for addressing you.

For many years I have enjoyed a tolerably good state of religious feeling; endeavored outwardly to adorn my Christian profession; felt a strong desire for the salvation of souls; and do not know but I ought to acknowledge to the praise of my heavenly Father, who hath helped me, that I have been enabled to encourage many a careless sinner to forsake his iniquities, and pointed many a penitent to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. Yet, notwithstanding the degree of Christian consolation enjoyed in the performance of these and other duties, my mind has often been depressed with a consciousness of unfitness for heaven, and a painful uncertainty resting on the future, which I felt might be removed by the blessed assurances of "perfect love, or holiness of heart;" and many times have I endeavored to seek that conformity to God's will which such a state supposes.

Perhaps I ought to say, that if we have one propensity to sin greater than another, *my* most powerful temptation is *unbelief*; and it not only affects my saving faith in Christ, as unbelief does, more or less, all Christians troubled with it, but it has, from my earliest recollections, made me skeptical in reference to all scripture and all spiritual things. How mind can affect mind, or spirit operate on spirit, has frequently embarrassed my faith, if not entirely paralyzed its strength. This difficulty has at once met me almost invariably, when convicted of the need of a deeper work of grace in the heart—that work which should take away the fear of death; that work without which I felt I was comparatively unhappy. My reasoning (or the temptation) was this: If faith, implicit faith, in Christ as the atonement, and in the Holy Spirit as the sanctifier, be essential, how can *my* unbelieving heart gain, or if I gain, how can I possibly retain it? Just as the awakened sinner excuses himself: "If I obtain religion, I fear I shall

not retain it ;” and so live on in its neglect. My mind was also much perplexed by the lives of many who made a profession of the blessing of holiness, so unlike what I considered the true standard ; and I had almost concluded very few either did or could enjoy what I felt was so essential to a fitness for heaven—at least I could not.

But thanks be to my heavenly Father, I have of late been better instructed—not only by experienced friends, and the word of God, but I trust also by the Holy Spirit. I now see in order to be a perfect Christian, I need *perfect faith* as well as perfect love ; and that the sacrifice by Christ being complete, it adapts itself to *my* unbelieving heart ; that if one Christian can be prepared for heaven, all may—I may ; if it is the privilege of one Christian to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and not only be able to say, “O, death, where is thy sting ; O, grave, where is thy victory ?” but feel *ready* to live or ready to die, all may—I may. For this I am seeking ; yes, I may say striving. I many times feel an earnest of the blessing, and am able to cry, Abba Father. I must acknowledge a great work already wrought, but more I need ; more I may have. Sometimes I realize I must expect no more than I implicitly trust my heavenly Father for ; and am almost able to ask largely, and believe accordingly. I frequently feel with the poet,

“ In thee, O Lord, I put my trust ;
Mighty, and merciful, and just,
Thy sacred word is past ;
And I, who dare thy word believe,
Without committing sin shall live,
Shall live to God at last.

I rest in thine almighty power,
The name of Jesus is my tower,
That hides my life above :
Thou canst, thou wilt my helper be,
My confidence is all in thee,
The faithful God of love.

While still to thee for help I call,
Thou wilt not suffer me to fall ;
Thou wilt not let me sin :
And thou wilt give me power to pray
Till all my sins are purged away,
And all thy mind brought in.”

This is my ardent desire, and this my faith would fain claim, even now. I do not know that I do not have the things I ask. I sometimes think I only lack the evidence. I can and do say,

Guide to Christian Perfection.

" Wherefore, in never-ceasing prayer,
 My soul to thy continual care
 I faithfully commend ;
 Assured that thou through life wilt save,
 And show thyself beyond the grave
 My everlasting friend."

Yours in Christian fellowship,

N. S.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE WHITE RAIMENT.

Sometimes I upward lift mine eyes,
 And, filled with pleasure, see
 The happy hosts that throng the skies,
 The blood-washed company.

How beautiful their robes I say ;
 Their garments all, how white !
 Fair as the sun's ascending ray,
 And clear as noon-day light.

O, Saviour ! thou hast made them clean,
 The garments that they wear ;
 And all who wash in thee their sin,
 May in those garments share.

I too may wear that spotless dress,
 Its beauty I may prove ;
 It is the robe of holiness,
 The dress of perfect love.

U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

Solon, (Me.) Oct. 25, 1840.
 DEAR BROTHER MERRITT,—Permit me to say through the Guide
 that I dearly love the precious Bible doctrine of Christian Perfection,
 and that I wish to contribute my mite in promoting so good a cause
 as that of spreading scriptural holiness through the land.
Glory be to God for what he has done even in this northern clime,

and in this house where I am now writing, within a few weeks. After coming from the Millennial Grove camp meeting in August last, where God displayed his saving power in so glorious a manner, we established what we call a class prayer meeting, to labor exclusively for holiness ; all are required to take a part, and to centre all the efforts to this one point, and through this means there are already living witnesses raised up to testify of a truth that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. I first took this course on *Livermore circuit* some four or five years since, in consequence of a suggestion from yourself in the public print, and wherever I have introduced it, and it has been properly attended to, God has been in our midst of a truth. Yes, my brethren, the spirit of holiness is gloriously revived in the church, and sinners have been converted on my circuit. I have already received twenty-five on probation since conference. Some of these are earnestly seeking for full redemption in the blood of the Lamb.

Your unworthy brother,

JOHN ALLEN.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE SAVIOUR OUR HELP.

Long did the clouds and darkness roll
Around my troubled breast,
No starlight shone upon my soul,
My footsteps found no rest.

To human help I looked around,
But vainly sought relief;
No balm of Gilead I found,
No healing for my grief.

Then to the Saviour's help I cried,
He, listening, heard my prayer ;
I saw his wounded hands and side,
And felt that hope was there.

He guides me in the better way,
He makes my footsteps strong ;
The gloomy night is changed to day,
And sadness changed to song.

U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS,

HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

XXX.

Thou hast contended with Satan, and hast been successful. Thou hast fought with him, and he has fled from thee. But, O, remember his artifices. Do not indulge the belief that his nature is changed. True, indeed, he is now very complacent, and is, perhaps, singing thee some syren song; but he was never more of a devil than he is now. He now assaults thee, *by not assaulting thee*; and knows that he shall conquer, when THOU FALLEST ASLEEP.

XXXI.

The value of a thing is known by what it takes to preserve it, as well as by what it originally cost. Men may steal your diamonds, who would not trouble things of less worth. The cost of holiness was the blood of the Son of God; and greatly does he mistake, who supposes that it can be preserved by any thing short of ETERNAL VIGILANCE.

XXXII.

If earthly plants are permitted to spring up in the heart, how is it possible that the tree of holiness should flourish? With the ground already occupied with earthly products, the roots of sanctification, deprived of the nourishment which should sustain them, necessarily wither and die. There is not nutriment enough to sustain both. Hence it is that our Saviour, in his divine wisdom, tells us of those who are choked with the riches, and cares, and pleasures of this life, "and BRING NO FRUIT TO PERFECTION."

XXXIII.

The power of Satan is great. And it is his appropriate business continually to assault the saints of God. If then, in some unhappy and evil moment, (by thine own fault be it remembered,) he gains an advantage, lament over it deeply, but do not be discouraged. Remember, if the great enemy gets from thee thy *resolution*, thy fixed purpose, he gets all. To be defeated is not to be wholly destroyed. But on the contrary, he, and he only, hath victory written upon his forehead, who, in the moment of his severest overthrow, hath still the heart to say, "with the Lord helping me, I'LL TRY AGAIN."

XXXIV.

It seems to have been the doctrine of some advocates of Christian perfection, especially some pious Catholics of former times, that the various propensities and affections, and particularly the bodily appetites, ought to be entirely *eradicated*. But this doctrine, when carried to its full extent, is one of the artifices of Satan, by which the cause of holiness has been greatly injured. It is more difficult to regulate the natural principles than to destroy them; and there is no doubt that the more difficult duty in this case, is the scripture one. We are not required to eradicate our natural propensities and affections, but to *purify* them. We are not required to cease to be men, but merely to become *holy* men.

XXXV.

It is of the nature of holiness to unite with whatever is like itself. It flies on

eagle's wings to meet its own image. Accordingly the soul, so long as it is stained with sin, has an affinity with what is sinful. But when it is purified from iniquity, it ascends boldly upward and rests, by the impulse of its own being, in the bosom of its God. The element of separation is taken away; and a union, strong as the universe and lasting as eternity, necessarily takes place. "*He that is joined unto the Lord, is one Spirit.*"—1 Cor. vi. 17.

XXXVI.

It is sometimes the case that those who are seeking sanctification, anticipate results which are more accordant with human wisdom, than with the ways of divine Providence. They say, "make me clean, and I shall have UNDERSTANDING. Sanctify me, and I shall be made STRONG." Such anticipations, which show that the heart is not yet delivered from its worldliness, are not confirmed, in the sense in which they now exist in the mind, by their subsequent experience. When sanctified, as they are thoroughly emptied of self, they have neither wisdom nor strength of their own. They know not what to do, nor how to do it. They abhor the idea of placing confidence in themselves, and find they must apply to the Saviour for every thing. They derive all from him. In the language of scripture, he is made to them "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, HE THAT GLORIETH, LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD."

XXXVII.

It is a melancholy fact, that the religion of many persons is not constantly operative, but is manifested periodically, or at some particular times. It is assumed, for instance, on the Sabbath; but is laid aside on the shelf during the week days. But true holiness, be it remembered, is not a thing to be worn for occasions; to be put off or put on, with an easy accommodation to circumstances or one's private convenience. It takes too deep root in the heart to be so easily disposed of as such a course would imply. It is meat, with which we are fed; clothing, with which we are clothed; the interior and permanent principle of life, which animates and sustains the whole man.

XXXVIII.

The remark is somewhere made, and very correctly, that "*it is a great loss to lose an affliction.*" Certain it is that afflictions have great power in purifying the mind. And if it be true that mental purification, in other words, holiness, is a result of all others the most desirable, we may properly attach a great value to whatever tends to this result. Prosperities flatter us with the hope that our rest is here; but afflictions lead our thoughts to another and a better land. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; and scourgeth every son that he receiveth."

XXXIX.

It is a striking remark, ascribed to St. Augustine, that *prayer is the measure of love*. A remark which implies that those who love much will pray much; and that those who pray much will love much. This remark is not more scripturally than philosophically true. It is the nature of love to lead the person who exercises this passion, as it were, out of himself. His heart is continually attracted toward the beloved object. He naturally and necessarily exercises, in connection with the object of love, the communion of the affections. And this, it will be readily seen, viz: the communion of the affections, is the essential characteristic; and perhaps it may be said, the essence and sum of prayer. In acceptable prayer the soul goes forth to God in various acts of adoration, supplication, and thanksgiving; all of

which imply feelings of trust and confidence, and particularly love to him who is the object of prayer. Accordingly he, who loves much, cannot help praying much. And on the other hand, when the streams of holy communion with God fail in any considerable degree, it is a sure sign that there is a shallowness and drought in that fountain of love, from which they have their source.

XI.

The divine life, which in every stage of its existence depends upon the presence of the Spirit of God, places a high estimate on mental tranquillity. It is no new thing to remark that the Holy Spirit has no congeniality with, and no pleasure in the soul, where strife and clamor have taken possession. If, therefore, we would have the Holy Spirit with us always, we must avoid and flee, with all the intensity of our being, all inordinate coveting, all envying, malice, and evil speaking, all impatience, jealousy and anger. Of such a heart, and such only, which is calm as well as pure, partaking something of the self-collected and sublime tranquillity of the divine mind, can it be said, in the truest and highest sense, that it is a **TEMPLE FITTED FOR THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY GHOST.**

XLI.

Where there is true Christian perfection, there is always great humility; a Christian grace which it is difficult to define, but which implies at least a quiet and subdued, a meek and forbearing spirit. Whatever may be our supposed gifts and graces, whatever may be our internal pleasures and raptures, they are far from furnishing evidence of completeness of Christian character without humility. It is this grace which, perhaps more than any other, imparts a beauty and attractiveness to the religious life; and which, while it is blessed with the favor and approbation of God, has the additional efficacy of disarming, in a considerable degree, even the hostility of unholy men. It has the appearance of a contradiction in terms, but is nevertheless true, that he who walks in humility walks in power.

XLII.

It is, perhaps, a common idea that humility implies weakness; and that lowliness of spirit is the same thing with spiritual imbecility. But this certainly is not a correct view. Christian humility, it is true, has nothing in itself; but it has much in God. In a word, it is the renunciation of our own wisdom, that we may receive wisdom from above; the negation and banishment of our own strength, that we may possess divine strength; the rejection of our own righteousness, that we may receive the righteousness of Christ. How, then, can it possibly be weak and imbecile, while it merely casts off the broken shield of earth, that it may put on the bright panoply of heaven?

XLIII.

In vain does the man attempt to see, whose sight is obscured by the cataract, or by some other equally ruinous disease. Nor is he less blind, over whose spiritual eye sin has drawn its opaque scales and films. Hence it is said in scripture, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." But break off and purge away the spiritual cataract, and the power of vision will return. In proportion as the eye of the soul is purified from the perplexity of earth's corruptions, does Christ become the true light of the mind; and the beauty of the divine character begins from that moment to unveil itself in all its wonderful perfection. **"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD."**

XLIV.

Pray earnestly for sanctification. Let this be the desire of your heart from morning till evening, and from evening till morning. On this subject keep the soul resolutely fixed. Take no denial. Refuse to be comforted, till you are blessed. But nevertheless, be careful, that you impose no conditions upon God. Say not, thou must do it in this way or in that. Remember, He is a sovereign; and that you are nothing. Sometimes He comes and turns out the evil legions of the heart with observation and with a triumphant shout. But not unfrequently He is mighty in his silence, and smites and destroys his enemies by an agency so mysterious and secret, that it seems to be alike unseen and unheard.

XLV.

When on a certain occasion the pious Fenelon, after having experienced much trouble and persecution from his opposers, was advised by some one to take greater precautions against the artifices and evil designs of men, he made answer in the true spirit of a Christian, *MORIAMUR IN SIMPLICITATE NOSTRA*, "*let us die in our simplicity.*" He that is wholly in Christ, has a oneness and purity of purpose, altogether inconsistent with those tricks and subtleties, which are so common among men. He walks in the broad day. He goes forth in the light of conscious honesty. He is willing that men and angels should read the very bottom of his heart. He has but one rule. His language is, in the ordinary affairs of life as well as in the duties of religion, "*My Father, what wilt thou have me to do?*"—His is Christian simplicity; and happy, thrice happy is he who possesses it.

T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.—Isa. xxxii. 2.

In the spiritual world, as well as in the natural, there are storms and tempests. They sometimes, in an unguarded moment, rush upon the soul, and seem ready to overpower it; and most certainly would, did we not hide ourselves at once in Christ. Trusting in Him, we are always safe, and even the tempest passes us unhurt. There is power in faith to bear up the soul under all assaults from the world, the flesh, and the devil, and he who trusts alone in Christ, may ride securely, like Noah's ark, above the flood, the deluge of sin and temptation, which threatens to engulf the soul. Let the soul be stayed on Christ, *in the time of its necessity*; the hour of jeopardy is the time of his love and power; call with earnestness on him for help, and he will appear, "*a present help in time of need.*" Thus

honor him with thy love and confidence, and he will shew thee his love and power. "He *knows how* to deliver the godly out of temptation. Weary wanderer, scorched by the sun's heat, and then again chilled by the winter's blast, come and find a resting place, under the shadow of Jesus. His is a lengthened shadow, and will protect thee every whit; and wherever thou goest, it will be to thee as a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night; just what thou needest. Say ye, who have found this shadow, and are resting beneath the wing of his love, what do the storms of life avail to harm thee? Art thou not secure, while trusting to his love, while leaning on his bosom, let whatever ills may surround thee? Rest thou always, O my soul, on Jesus, and thou art safe, not only from the malice of wicked men, but from thy greater enemy, Satan. When he cometh, with his hellish purposes to worry thee, and cause thee to sin, then do thou always present a heart impenetrable, because resting on Jesus. Present Jesus as thy shield, and thy strength. Let Satan find nothing in thee but the love of Jesus, and thou art safe, art secure. Blessed be our God and Father, for the gift of a Saviour to be man's hiding place and refuge in *every time of trouble*.

Leaving every other refuge, O Jesus, I fly to thee; under thy wing I trust; to thy power, to thy protection, I commit the keeping of my soul. I have no strength against my foes, separate from thee. But in thee I conquer, I more than conquer. I triumph, I rejoice.

"Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

Happy, happy soul, that can appeal to the omniscient Jesus and say, *Thou knowest that I love thee*. Thou, who seest the depths of my heart, canst read there the entire devotion of my soul to thee; the love that burns unceasingly, and owns no rival to thee. If I do not love thee, O my Saviour, I love nothing. Then is my soul without emotion. But thou knowest that I love thee. Thou art the centre about which all my thoughts revolve. I am on earth, yet my heart, my treasure is in heaven, for thou art there. Gladly do I give up all for thee. I count nothing a sacrifice which thou demandest. I love thy holiness, thy condescension. Thou dost take cognizance of me, and of my little concerns. What is too minute for thee? I love thee for thy humanity; for shewing in thy example, what man should be, and what man may be, by grace, through faith, in thee. Sweet to rely on thee as a brother, friend, and prove thee faithful. Sweet to prove thee, *Jesus, a saviour from sin*. Yes, I love thee, with my whole heart. O may my heart enlarge, to take in more and more of thine own nature. Love, immortal principle, divine love! Whose heart does not pant to receive and cherish it? Who will not put out the love of self, the love of the world, to receive the light, and beauty, and glory, which comes from loving Jesus, and

Jesus only? Whose heart would not embrace the full image of love? *The love of Jesus*, what honor it gains to the soul. It brings Christ down to dwell on earth. It is a transforming principle. The soul that loves Jesus, grows up into his likeness. The love of Jesus unites not with the love of sin; there is no agreement of Christ and Belial. The love of Jesus unites not with the love of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Think not, that thou lovest Jesus, if thou lovest not holiness. Think not that thou lovest Jesus, if thou art careless about doing his will. If any man love me, he will keep my words, says Jesus; and I and my Father will come to him, and make our abode with him. See here, what is comprehended in loving Jesus.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PERFECT CHRISTIAN.

A perfect Christian is not placed beyond the reach of temptation. Some have supposed that when a Christian was made perfect, he could no longer be tempted. Such have greatly erred, not knowing the truth. Perhaps there are none so severely tempted and tried as is the holy Christian. It is true, the devil, nor any of his works, find any place in his heart, yet there is almost an unceasing effort to make an entrance there. It is the perfect Christian that the devil wishes, above all others, to destroy. Against him he directs his arrows with increasing hostility. Having been denied a place in his heart, his object now is to regain his former residence. For this, he will summon all his art, cunning, forces, and malignity. He must be attacked at every assailable point. No exertion is unmade that the Christian may be overthrown. And the better to accomplish his purpose, Satan will transform himself into an angel of light. Now, if possible, he will make every thing appear very attractive and lovely. He labors to make an impression on the mind, which, though often unperceived by the Christian, he designs for his destruction. Presented in such a form, the impression may be taken for a *divine impression*, and thus the Christian may be greatly deceived; and being deceived under such circumstances, how fatal may be the result! Hence the importance of regarding the admonition of the apostle: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone into the world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. And this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."—1 John, iv. 1, 2, 3. How many have fallen from this high state of Christian experience through the workings of Satan, which they have mistaken for the operations of the spirit of God? Therefore, "*try the spirits whether they be of God.*" Be not "deceived." Remember that Satan can not only appear in the form of a *subtle serpent*, of a *roaring lion*, but also in the form of an *angel of light*.—2 Cor. xi. 14. Do not entertain the idea for a moment, that, though you are made perfect in love, you are beyond the influence of temptation. Many by listening to this delusive suggestion of the great deceiver, have sold their birthright.

Remember, too, that the happy pair in Eden, in their sinless state, were tempted. Unhappily they listened to the temptation, and how dreadful the result. Our blessed Saviour also was tempted, who "knew no sin." Even "forty days was he tempted of the devil." And think you, though you may have a heart freed from sin, that you are beyond the reach of this subtle deceiver? Watch every moment against his deceptions. Listen not to his "devices." He is a liar, and the father of lies. His object is to bring you into darkness, and finally to ruin. Depend alone on Christ. He who was "tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin," can succor those that are tempted.

To be a perfect Christian does not prevent the absolute necessity of the constant appropriation of the blood of Christ. Preposterous is the sentiment that when the Christian is made perfect, he no longer needs the efficacy of the blood of Christ. None need the constant application of the blood of Christ more than does the holy Christian. None feel the need of his blood more than do such. The constant language of their hearts is,

"Every moment, Lord, we need the merit of thy blood!"

They needed the blood of Christ to make them clean; they now need his blood to *keep them clean*. They can no more be kept perfect without his blood than they could be made perfect without it. The Christian never will be placed in circumstances where he will not need the efficacy of the atoning blood. By faith in the atoning merit, he is enabled to walk, to live, to stand fast in his profession, and to press forward in the discharge of all Christian duties, amid all the trials and disappointments of life, to his eternal reward in heaven. Let no one suppose, therefore, that he can live one moment without Christ; that he can retain the great blessing of perfect love without a constant trust in the merit of his death. To the holy soul, Christ is *all* and *IN ALL*. He dare not for one moment trust in any other object, however great that object. In Christ he "lives,

moves, and has his being." The "life he now lives is by faith on the Son of God." He is content with nothing but a present Saviour, a present faith, a present heaven. He believes now, receives now, and his "joy is full." He feels every moment that the "blood of Jesus Christ his Son saves from all sin."

R. W. A.

Eastford, Conn. Sept. 17.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER.

On the subject of Christian Perfection, correct instruction is a great desideratum. A sort of dreamy perfection prevails too much. It is often a temporary flame which is sought after, instead of a calm, steady and holy fire. Attendant circumstances are mistaken for the thing itself, and sometimes a mere burst of feeling is substituted for the realities of holiness. If those, who are interested, would endeavor to instruct the church on the subject, instead of trying to excite their feelings so much, I believe more good would be done. I do not mean to imply, however, that it is not necessary to enlist the feelings, but when so much instruction is needed, it seems to me, that it would be better to spend more of the time in our meetings for this purpose, in laying the foundation, in teaching the doctrine.

As regards myself, I think I now understand how I have missed the mark, notwithstanding I have been seeking the blessing so long, and under so favorable circumstances. The mystery is solved, and made clear by the word of God. See Col. ii. 20. I see clearly what the difficulty has been with me. I have not been dead to the world. Not long since I saw the ground on which I had stumbled, and came to a resolution to know, if possible, what it meant by being dead to the world. And I trust I have now become dead to the world, by offering myself a living sacrifice to the Lord. I have consecrated the powers and faculties of my mind, the strength of my body, and whatever God has given me, all to the Lord, to be used to his glory. This determination of mind, this consecration I not only made before God, but declared it openly at class meeting. I have steadily, since then, pursued *the way of faith in Christ*, by the way of *consecration to Him*, and have experienced a life giving influence from it. I think I am now enabled to do the will of God, and act for his glory, and that solely. I trust I am now enjoying, though perhaps in a low degree, compared with many others, the blessing of a sanctified state, the beginning of that great work of grace in the heart.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER BY A WESLEYAN LOCAL PREACHER.

I have given God my undivided heart ; believing that he does accept of it, and believing that "the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Like a stone which the builder takes, and puts on the foundation, so do I lie on Christ's blood and God's promises ; giving God my soul and body a living sacrifice, and covenanting with him never to doubt more. My language is, I will believe,—I will sooner die than doubt. This decision of mind, attended with a refusal to regard frames and feelings as any criterion of my state,—but believing he does save, whether filled or emptied,—raised up or cast down ; leaving the quantity of comfort to God's wisdom, knowing I am not saved by *feeling*, but by *faith*. It is *holiness* I want, and have,—not *ecstasy*. A solid peace is my birthright ; with that I am content. If God give me more I am thankful ; if not, I am content, knowing that the trial of my faith is more precious than uncertain ecstasies. I never look at my imperfections without believing that his blood does, *that moment*, wash them all away. One act of faith does more good than twenty years' prayer and duties without it. My prayer is now different from what it was when I was in a justified state. I don't ask, expecting an answer at some other time, but I believe I receive it *now, while I am praying*, and the Holy Ghost says you have it.

I am now praying to be "filled with the Spirit," and have received partial glimpses of this state. It is not an overflowing with joy ; this would unfit us to live in the world ; but a *state* of soul. God *himself* dwells in and fills up every part,—the length, breadth, depth, and height of the law of love ; such as thinking no evil, bearing all things, believing all things, will be looked at with a steadiness and pleasure, knowing that it is done. It is a distinct state from being cleansed from all sin, or emptied : "this," says Mr. Fletcher, "is a *negative* salvation ; the *positive* of which is, 'And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.' " Ezek. xxxvi. 27. *Love*, then, is equal to all demands.

As to my class meetings, I agonize in believing prayer for the whole of the members of my three classes, that the whole of them may be sanctified throughout, body, soul, and spirit, knowing that while my prayer is being offered up, "faithful is he that hath called them, who also *will* do it." I confess before them my *utmost* salvation, to the very outside of what I enjoy : this honors God, and does not exalt self ; as they who are not cleansed from the filth of self and pride say. No blessing can be *held without confession*.

I endeavor to make the atonement of Christ as being a substitute, and his having died in my stead, as plain as possible to a consciously lost sinner ; and there is not much difficulty in doing this when the heart is broken for sin and from sin. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," is spoken in mighty power to a character in this state. The act of believing is the penitent's ; the same as it is the act of a man who jumps in the water when intending to bathe himself.

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☞ Please to read the cover of the Guide this month, especially the inside.

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POWER FROM ON HIGH:

A SERMON, BY REV. S. S. SMITH.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE AUTHOR.

In January last, at a regular meeting of the Association of which I am a member, it fell to my lot to read a sermon for the usual criticism on such an occasion. As my mind had for some time previous labored upon the subject here presented, I selected it as a theme of discourse; partly that I might be shown the way of God more perfectly if I had adopted an error, and partly that my brethren might be led to examine the doctrine, if true. Of the criticisms of most of the brethren present, I had no occasion to complain;—they were kind and courteous—characteristic of the general spirit of the brethren. No one then showed me, or even undertook to show me, by scripture argument, that I had departed from “our only rule of faith and practice” in the general doctrine of the discourse; and I went out from the meeting without having my belief in the truth of it shaken in the least degree. Since then, I have preached the sermon upon an ordination occasion; and have also preached it and others of a similar character, before the people of my present charge; and I have likewise read it to many individual clerical brethren; not one of whom has directly dissented from the doctrine of the discourse, or expressed fear for the peace and purity of the church from the advocacy of it. And yet the original reading of the discourse has laid me, somewhat extensively, under the imputation of being a “Perfectionist;” a name which,—as attached to a certain class of antinomian errorists,—I have ever abhorred, and do still abhor. It has even been said that I “came out fully and decidedly before the association, in favor of Perfectionism;” and some of my brethren have recently frankly avowed to me that my advocacy of this doctrine authorizes them to say that I have embraced dangerous, and even

fundamental errors. Now without imputing to these brethren any other desire than that of promoting the "peace and prosperity of Zion," still it is my privilege to state publicly what these "*dangerous doctrines*" are that I have embraced, rather than leave it to be inferred by those who may hear only that I have departed from the "faith which was once delivered to the saints." Here is the "head and front of my offending;" here my only departure from the modern footsteps of the flock. Already I have suffered from the direct charge of Perfectionism preferred against me by some of my brethren in the ministry; and I may on this account be called to still greater trials; yet I desire to possess my soul in patience, while at the same time I deem it my duty to publish far and wide the blessed truth that Jesus Christ is still he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

The Sermon was written without any expectation of its being thus called to pass from manuscript to print; but the circumstances above alluded to have drawn it out. The notes have been added since I have decided to publish; and they are added in this form, that the body of the sermon may remain,—a few verbal alterations excepted,—the same that I read before the association.

NEWTON CENTRE, Nov., 1840.

SERMON.

Luke xxiv. 49. "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

The design of the present discourse will not permit a protracted notice of the nature of the moral conflict that is pending between the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the "God of this world—the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Suffice it to say, the Captain of our salvation well understood the nature of this conflict, and the qualifications requisite for carrying it on to a triumphant issue. When, therefore, he was about to ascend to his throne in the heavens, and leave the work which he had so conspicuously begun to be carried on by his followers, he knew what power they needed to enable them to fulfil their high commission successfully. Having commanded them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, as the only means of subverting the powers of darkness, he also commanded them not to commence this great work with their present degree of piety, or measure of faith; but to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high;"—"for ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," said he, "not many days hence."

As the surprising success of the primitive church stands immediately connected with this endowment of power from on high, and without which she would have labored comparatively in vain for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom on earth, it is an important subject of inquiry,

I. WHAT WAS THE POWER PROMISED IN THE TEXT?

II. WHY WAS IT GRANTED TO THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH? and

III. WAS IT THE DESIGN OF OUR LORD TO CONTINUE THAT POWER IN THE CHURCH TO THE END OF THE WORLD?

I. *What was the power, &c.* I answer first, negatively:—It was not regeneration, or the new birth, without which a man cannot enter the "kingdom of Heaven." The one hundred and twenty who were baptized with the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost, had previously been "born of God." Christ had called them *friends*,—had assured them that their names were written in Heaven, and that where he went they should go also. Although it is said, John vii. 39, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*, because that Jesus was not yet glorified;" yet this must relate to some other operation of the Spirit than that of regeneration, unless indeed we come to the conclusion that no person on earth was regenerated previous to the day of pentecost*—a conclusion the Christian church will be slow to adopt.

* This is a prominent doctrine of the sect called "Perfectionists;"—a doctrine so fundamentally erroneous, however, that it can find but few advocates in this enlightened age of the church. It is by no means certain that the addition of the word *given*, to the original of the text above quoted, correctly expresses the meaning of the inspired writer. The Holy Ghost had been given to all ancient saints;—and Zacharias and Elizabeth are said to have been filled with the Holy Ghost; as was also John Baptist, even from his birth. And yet John said to Jesus, "I have need to be baptized of thee;" which certainly could not have been the case, had not the baptism which Jesus gave, been peculiar to the Christian dispensation;—unlike what had ever before been enjoyed by the saints of God. The peculiarity of this baptism was that it revealed Jesus Christ to the believer as the only appropriate object of evangelical faith. "When he,—the comforter,—is come, he shall glorify me, for he shall take of the things of mine and shall show them unto you." This the Holy Spirit had never done to ancient saints, who had desired to see this new dispensation of grace, and had not seen it. God in Christ could not have been seen by the eye of faith previous to the incarnation and subsequent exaltation of Jesus. "Probably most of those devotional expressions in the Old Testament, which raise *our* thoughts to Heaven, only carried the thoughts of the Israelites within the veil. The whole of their worship was a presentiment and promise of the approaching manifestation of God in Christ; and not merely a

Evidently the gift of the Holy Ghost here alluded to, is the power from on high referred to in the text, and as evidently it was not regeneration.

It was not the spirit of inspiration. The Old Testament writers were inspired without this *power*; and but five of those who received it on the day of pentecost, were employed as sacred penmen; and three only of the subsequent thousands who were similarly endued, were so employed by the Holy Ghost.

It was not the power of working miracles. Paul says, "To one was given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom—to another, the word of

promise of it, but an actual provision to aid them in lifting their thoughts to God, and conceiving of the Divine Personality, till that more glorious manifestation should take place." Christ is the image of the invisible God; and now the Holy Ghost presents him to the soul of the believer as the only "permanent, adequate, apprehensible representation of the invisible Deity." "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me," says Paul; and this revelation was made, probably, not when he was converted on his way to Damascus, but when he was subsequently *filled, or baptized with the Holy Ghost*; Acts ix. 17. "My little children, for whom I travel in birth again, till Christ be formed in you," said Paul to the Galatians. He had once travelled in birth for their conversion, and they were become "little children;" but they had not been baptized with the Holy Ghost. The comforter, which was Jesus Christ in the soul the hope of glory, was given only by this baptism; and therefore John could appropriately say that this particular ministration of the spirit *was not yet, because that Jesus, who was thereby to be revealed, was not yet glorified.*

A similar mistake in the meaning of the inspired text is made in our translation of Acts xix. 2; where the twelve disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus are made to say that they had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost; thus making them manifest a degree of ignorance wholly inexcusable in a Jew, or a disciple of John, and proving conclusively that they were not disciples, and that Paul might as well have asked any other twelve men at Ephesus, as themselves, whether they had received the Holy Ghost. But these were disciples,—they had been born of the Spirit,—and Paul asked them if they had also been baptized with the Holy Ghost—or whether the Comforter, which is Christ in the soul the hope of glory, had visited them? and they replied that they had not heard of this new ministration of the Spirit. Dr. Bloomfield refers Paul's inquiry, and the answer of these disciples, to John vii. 39, where it is said, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." There can hardly be a doubt in the mind of an intelligent Bible reader, that John meant to say that the "ministration of the Spirit," which Paul says, 2 Cor. iii. 7—11, excels in glory the ancient dispensation, *was not yet.* And it must also be evident that this "ministration" belongs to the present age of the church, as much as it did to the primitive; and consequently that we need the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as much as the apostles, or Ephesian disciples did.

knowledge—to another, the gifts of healing—to another, miracles—to another, divers kinds of tongues ;—all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” “Are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues?” &c. Evidently, then, the power from on high was not necessarily a power to work miracles. God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, and of Peter and John ; but there is no evidence that he did by any of the household of Cornelius, upon whom the Holy Ghost fell as it did upon the disciples on the day of pentecost. Had the thousands, who were baptized with the Holy Ghost as well as Peter, received by that baptism the power of healing, it would hardly have been necessary to bring the sick into the streets, that the shadow of Peter passing by might fall upon some of them. This power was seldom granted to any, and never lodged even with this favored few. Peter could not deliver himself from prison ; and Paul could not heal Trophimus, whom he once left at Miletum, sick.

It was not a spirit of infallibility. The apostles did not know that Ananias and Sapphira were hypocrites, until their subsequent words proved them so. Philip baptized Simon Magus ; and Paul received Demas, and Alexander the coppersmith, and many other false brethren, who subsequently did both him and the church great damage. So far as some of them were inspired, their words were infallible truth ; but as the baptism with the Holy Ghost was not itself the spirit of inspiration, it did not necessarily render its subjects infallible. Neither did it translate them into a state of confirmed sanctification, or sinless perfection.* Paul had occasion to watch,

* By “*sinless perfection*,” I understand a “*state of sanctification*” in which there is not a momentary liability to fall into sin, and which does not call for continual watchfulness and prayer. Such a state is no where to be found this side heaven, and is no where demanded of us in the Bible ;—it would not be a state of probation, but of final attainment—of retribution. With the late excellent Dr. Emmons, I fully believe that “the imperfection of Christians consists in the inconstancy of that holy ‘love which is the fulfilling of the law,’ rather than in the imperfection of that love itself.” The pious John Newton could say, “There are seasons when I love God with all my heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and I long for the harp and the tongue of an angel wherewith to express that love. But, alas, those seasons are generally of short duration.” Now how inconstant the apostles and primitive Christians were in the exercise of *such love*, I have no means of knowing.

and pray, and keep under his body, lest, having preached to others, he himself should be cast away.

What, then, was the power from on high promised in the text? I answer, second, affirmatively :—It was such a measure and fulness of the divine influence as transformed the whole moral character of the recipients. In the language of Harris, the eloquent author of "*The Great Teacher*," "The church became one region of life—of divine vitality throughout, in which whosoever breathed, lived—enjoyed life in perfection. From a state of unsightly barrenness and drought, it was suddenly covered with verdure, like the garden of the Lord. Believers themselves seemed re-converted : if sinners became saints, saints themselves became as angels ; thus fulfilling the prophecy which said, 'The weak shall be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord.' Every Christian saw in every other the face of an angel—looks of benevolence and brotherly love ; one interest prevailed,—one subject of emulation swallowed up every other ; who should approach nearest to the likeness of Christ ; which should do most for the enlargement of his reign." "The whole community of them that believed were of one heart, and of one mind ; the spirit of Christ animated the whole—became the one heart of the whole community, and every particular pulse beat in concert with it."

However faint-hearted and fearful the disciples were previous to this event, their faith in their risen Lord, and their attachment to his cause, were now like Mount Zion, which could not be moved. Peter, the trembling culprit, before an idle servant girl denying with oaths and curses that he even knew Jesus of Nazareth, could now stand up manfully before the Jewish Sanhedrim, and charge upon them the murder of the Lord of Glory.

Never was change wrought in men on earth more thorough, than was that wrought in the followers of Christ by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Their love and zeal were kindled to a flame. They were ready to go any where, to be any thing, and to do any thing, so that he might be glorified by them. They "kept back nothing of all that they possessed" from his sacred cause ; but brought every

If, however, their "peace was like a river,"—"broad, deep, and perpetual,"—and if from them "flowed rivers of living water," they certainly were not as inconstant as modern Christians generally are.

thing,—time, talents, property, body and soul, and laid all at his feet. They consulted not with flesh and blood as to the path of duty—neither did they love husband or wife, parent or child, or even their own life in comparison with him. They were now endued with a measure of almighty power, which none of their enemies could gainsay or resist. It was not only evident to the rulers of the Jewish nation that they had been with Jesus Christ, but even to all men that Jesus Christ was with them. Wherever they went, all obstacles vanished before them, so that they triumphed in every place in making known the savor of Christ's name. Under their ministry converts were multiplied as the drops of the dew, and the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily.

This power was also the promise of Christ to come again to his followers, and be with them in all their labors and through all their life. And the primitive church rejoiced more in this spiritual presence of her Lord, than his immediate followers had in his personal presence. Christ was in them the hope of glory; and he gave them a joy and a peace which the world could neither give nor take away. They lived above the world while they lived in it, and walked by faith and not by sight. The love of Christ constrained them to holy obedience and holy zeal; it sustained them under every trial, and caused them to rejoice whether in prosperity or in adversity,—whether among friends or enemies,—whether in life or in death. "I will not leave you comfortless," said Christ, "but will come unto you;" and in this "power from on high" he abundantly fulfilled his gracious promise.*

* That the baptism with the Holy Ghost was thus a sanctifying power is evident from the words of Christ, John vii. 38—"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from him shall flow rivers of living water." "But this spake he, (says John,) of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Now the primitive Christians, under the influence of this baptism, did believe all the scripture testimony concerning Christ;—they were "full of faith," and "rivers of living water" did flow through and from their souls;—the "Spirit" was in them "as a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Consequently "the multitudes of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul, and great grace was upon them all."

Paul also assures us that this baptism was a sanctifying influence. 2 Cor. iii. 18—"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord." The meaning of this and the preceding verse, is probably this—"Now the Lord is

II. *Why was this power granted to the primitive Church?*

It was pre-eminently to qualify its members for the great and important work assigned them of revolutionizing the world. Never were created beings, on earth, certainly, even if in the universe, called to a more difficult and responsible work than were the followers of our Lord. They were commanded to go into all the world, and carry on an offensive warfare against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, and wrest the earth out of the hands of the usurper who claimed to be its God. They needed then one "stronger than the strong man armed," to go with them, or Satan would but mock at their feeble endeavors. His kingdom was not to be overthrown by human might and power, but by the spirit of the living God. If men, therefore, were the appointed agents for its overthrow, they must be endued with power from on high, else they would labor in vain, and "spend their strength for nought and in vain."

Again, Christ designed that the glory of the New Testament church should excel that of the Old, (Testament church,) as the brightness of the sun excels the glimmerings of a star. Ancient saints had at best enjoyed but the twilight of the day of salvation. But upon the New Testament church the sun had risen, and the full

that spirit;" of whose glorious ministration he had previously spoken; i. e. Jesus Christ is by this ministration revealed in the soul, so that the believer sees, as in a mirror, his glorious character and grace, and is thus changed into his moral image; has "the same mind wrought in him that was also in Christ;" and being thus made a "partaker of the divine nature, he is enabled to escape the corruptions that are in the world." Now evidently if he is filled with this spirit,—*"filled with all the fulness of God,"*—he is *"a sanctified vessel, meet for the Master's use."* In the very nature of the case, no person can be *"full of the Holy Ghost,"* unless every power and faculty of his soul is brought into sweet subjection to the will of God. The spirit does not literally dwell in the human body, as in a *"temple,"* without thereby imparting to it any of his own holy nature; his indwelling is spirit acting upon spirit—mind upon mind;—ruling in the soul by love; purifying it, and rendering it like Christ—*"holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."* Such were those early Christians who could say with John, *"As He was, so are we in this world."* I do not say that the spirit does not operate upon the mind without producing this entire change; for I believe there are different degrees of sanctification, from *"faith as a grain of mustard seed,"* to perfect faith: but evidently any thing short of *"perfect love,"* is not the fulness of the spirit's operation:—and if being *"full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith,"* does not produce *"perfect love,"* no operation of the spirit, as I conceive, can produce it.

glory of the Lord had shined upon her. Isaiah had prophetically addressed the Christian church with the exhortation, "Arise; shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." And with other ancient prophets he had triumphed in view of the glory of Messiah's reign, when "a little one was to become a thousand, and a small one as a great nation;" when "the feeble should be like David, and the house of David like God and the angel of the Lord." Christ had also himself testified to the same point in the declaration that John the Baptist, although the greatest prophet that had ever been on earth, was less than the least minister in the gospel church. But how was this stupendous change to be wrought? Whence was this transforming power to come, that this prediction might be fulfilled? We know how the change was accomplished by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. The church suddenly arose out of obscurity, and at once became beautiful as Tirza, comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army with banners.

Again. John had said that Christ would baptize his people with the Holy Ghost. And just before his ascension to Heaven, Christ himself said to his disciples, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The granting of this power, then, was the completion of Christ's mission to earth—the last gift of God to man,—the only agency by which the world was to be redeemed from the power and dominion of sin.*

And finally, Christ designed, in setting up his kingdom on earth, that the whole work of salvation should be performed by himself. Not a stone in his spiritual temple was to be polished by any other hand than his own;—not a soul saved from earth by any other efficient agency than his own. And yet he would work by subordinate instrumentalities. In appointing men, therefore, instead of angels to carry on his work, it was necessary not only that he should be with them to encourage and enable them to work, but himself work in them, that the glory might all belong to him. In this sense the whole work of man's salvation begins, centres, and ends in Christ—he is alone in

* "This *power from on high* was the *promise of the Father*, the great promise of the New Testament, as the promise of the coming of Christ was of the Old Testament. And if it be the *promise of the Father*, we may be sure the promise is *invaluable*, and the thing promised *invaluable*."—Henry in *loc*.

it, and of the people there are none with him. His church, although "the light of the world and the salt of the earth," is as emphatically the instrument in his hand, as is the saw or the hammer in the hands of him who handles them.

Never, then, was divine work more appropriate, more indispensable, than the endowment of power from on high to the primitive church. Any thing less than this would have been a failure, not only in the promise of Christ to be with his people, but also in the work he had so auspiciously begun. If he had not thus returned in spirit and filled his disciples with himself, his cause would have died in less time than he had personally spent in giving it life;—the timid fishermen of Galilee would have returned to their humble occupation—they did so return after the crucifixion and resurrection of their Lord, mourning perhaps over their disappointment, and saying, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel,"—and a world of sinners had still perished in ignorance of the way of salvation, so needful was this endowment of power from on high.

III. Was it the design of Christ to continue this power in the Church to the end of the world?

Undoubtedly it was. Pentecostal baptism was a part of the work which Christ came into the world expressly to perform. John, the immediate herald of the Incarnate Deity, had said of him, that He should "baptize his people with the Holy Ghost;" not a few merely of his primitive followers, but his believing people;—not that he should regenerate them; for millions had been regenerated by the Spirit of God, previous to this gift of the Holy Ghost after Christ was glorified. If Christ, then, be the "same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever," he is still "He that shall baptize his people with the Holy Ghost;" and as power from on high was granted by this baptism, we believe that he designed that primitive power should continue with a believing people to the end of the world.

Again, the promise of Christ to be with his people is as valid now as it was eighteen hundred years ago. But how was he with his immediate followers? Let his own words answer:—"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I go away, I will send him unto you, and he shall glorify me; for he shall take of the things of mine and shall

show them unto you." This promise was fulfilled by the baptism with the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost, and by subsequent similar effusions on those that believed. How, then, is Christ with his people now? How little, indeed, is he known among his people now! How few, comparatively, have his love shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, after the example of primitive times! How few can speak of him in language peculiar to primitive Christians! How little light, how little heat, how little influence and activity are to be found among those that bear the name of Christ! Few, comparatively, are striving to excel in righteousness;—while it seems to be the great concern with the multitude of his professed followers, to find how little grace they may have and yet escape hell;—how little holy conformity to the will of God they may have, and get to heaven.*

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate," is indeed privileged above the common walks of Christian life—close on the verge of Heaven;—and we call this *dying grace*;—as though the religion of Christ was chiefly designed to render dying believers comfortable, instead of making living believers useful. But in the primitive church Christ fulfilled his promise to be with his people when they were in health, as well as when they were in sickness and in death; as manifestly with Paul when he stood upon Mars' Hill, as when he was "ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand." "Lo, I am with you always," is the promise; not merely when you "pass through the dark valley and shadow of death," but when in faithfulness to my commands, you pursue the ordinary walks of life. And this promise was no more originally designed for the primitive age of the church than for every subsequent age of her existence on earth. The same is also true of the ancient prophetic descriptions of the superior glory and power of the New Testament church. If not, what evidence have we that the church will ever

* The sublime allegory of Bunyan, entitled "*Holy War*," says, that Immanuel left "Mansoul," when the inhabitants began to hold parley with "my lord *Love-the-World*," and "my lord *Carnality*," leaving the citadel in charge of "my lord *Conscience*;" and that immediately "*Diabolus*" sent up an army of "thirty thousand doubters" to assault the place. How much "religion of conscience" there is in the church, and how little of the primitive religion of Christ, I do not presume to decide. This much, however, is certain: "my lord *Love-the-World*," and "my lord *Carnality*" still have a place within her sacred enclosure, and the "thirty thousand doubters" are not yet expelled therefrom.

come up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." Peter has certainly appropriated all the ancient promises of this nature to the primitive age, and declared that they received a fulfilment in the baptism with the Holy Ghost. "Yea, (says he,) all the prophets, from Samuel, and all that follow after, have spoken of these days." Now if the baptism with the Spirit, which alone endued the disciples with power from on high, was designed by Christ to be peculiar to the primitive age, then all the ancient predictions of the glory of the gospel church have received their final fulfilment, and we may never again quote them, and hope for a brighter day of gospel light on their account. Nay, John's declaration that Christ baptizeth his people with the Holy Ghost, was applicable only to the primitive church! And even our Lord's own promise to be with his followers to the end of the world, meant only to the end of the Jewish commonwealth! And the cautions, admonitions, and instructions of Paul, originally addressed to Christians who had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, are wholly inapplicable to us who may not expect to be so baptized. To this fearful result are we reduced, if the sentiment be true that the power from on high, promised in the text, was designed by Christ only for the primitive church. *

And, finally, if Christ did not design to continue primitive power in the church to the end of the world, then either that power did not tend to render its subjects holy, and like their Divine Head, or he did not design to continue a like holy church on earth. If primitive Christians were led to an entire consecration of themselves to Christ by this special baptism of the Spirit, then they could not have been led to such a consecration in any other way; and either the modern church must be baptized with the same Spirit, or never in this world

* By what scripture authority is it said that,—beside the spirit of inspiration, and the power of working miracles, both of which were possessed by some men previous to the day of Pentecost, and by but very few after that period—there was a special gift of the Holy Ghost to the apostles and primitive Christians, which subsequent believers have no right to expect? That such is the almost universal sentiment in the church, I am well aware; but I am utterly unable to account for this prevalent belief, but upon the principle of *unbelief* in the word and testimony of Jesus Christ. Certainly the Bible teaches no such doctrine; and it is as really a "tradition, which makes the word of God (comparatively) of no effect," as was any ancient tradition of the Jews, or any modern dogma of the Romish church.

be entirely consecrated to Christ. Settle the question, what was the effect of the endowment of power from on high in the primitive age, and also whether a similar power is not essential to the highest prosperity of the church now, and we can judge whether our Lord designed to produce a similar effect by a similar cause, in any other age of the church than the primitive. Christians need moral courage now as much as they did eighteen hundred years ago. The world needs a high standard of holiness in the church now as much as it did then. And if we cannot have the same power from on high that primitive Christians had, we cannot "follow them as they followed the Lord." They were raised up and appointed of God to be examples to all who should follow them in the church of what is the true spirit of Christianity. And if Christ did not design to continue the same power to succeeding generations of believers that he granted to his immediate followers, he might as well have sent a company of angels to be our patterns, as a generation of men baptized with the Holy Ghost. We could follow the one without the baptism as easily as the other; and without it, we can follow neither.*

* The pastoral letter of the General Association of Mass. for 1840, says:—"In the primitive age of the church, Christians literally, and with entire purpose, consecrated themselves and all their possessions to the cause of Christ. They felt they were not their own, but his who had died to redeem them; and they denied themselves, took up their cross daily, and followed him. Under the influence of this deep and fixed impression, they went forth and labored to advance the cause they so much loved; and the Holy Ghost went with them, making the word and means quick and powerful: sinners by hundreds and thousands were converted, and the religion of the cross spread in a few centuries over the greater part of the then known world."

"May it not, then, be reasonably expected at the present day, that if the principle of entire consecration^(a) existed in the hearts of Christians generally, there would be greater displays of converting and sanctifying grace?"

Thus far the General Association. Now I would ask—what but the "power from on high," promised in the text, led primitive Christians to this "entire consecration" to Christ? and if for nearly seventeen hundred years Christians have been generally destitute of a like spirit of consecration, what but "power from on high" will re-produce it, that the word of the Lord may again "mightily grow and prevail" on earth? Certainly those who had seen Christ face to face, and been eye witnesses of his glory, did not need *power from on high* to lead them to entire consecration to him, any more than we do, who live in these ends of the earth. And if they had never been thus consecrated without the power, so neither will the modern church ever be thus consecrated without it.

(a) "The term consecration is synonymous with holiness. Holiness is a communi-

But the question may arise in the mind of the serious inquirer after truth,—why has not this “power” remained in the church, if it was the design of Christ to continue it to any other than the first age thereof? I answer: The subjects of this *power* were not mere passive machines, but free agents, still under the infirmities and temptations of life: and, consequently, capable of improving or abusing the *power* thus granted them. Some improved the talent better than others; and some churches, even while under apostolic instruction, departed from the faith. Paul himself predicted a falling away from primitive power and purity, and the rise of the “man of sin” in the church. Why our Lord permitted this falling away, is among the deep things of God of which we have no right to speak. But this may be said:—an apostate church could not possess the *power*, and exhibit the glory of the true church. While, then, the nominal church arrogated to herself the title and privileges of the “Bride,” the true witnesses for Christ were left in his holy sovereignty to “prophecy in sackcloth,” without the habiliments and glory of the primitive church, “*the fine linen, clean and white,*” with which she is again to be adorned.*

But why was not the church again “endued with power from on high,” at the time of the reformation? I answer: This promised gift is bestowed only in answer to the prayer of faith. The word of Christ still is, “according to thy faith, be it unto thee;” and, “if ye will not believe, neither shall ye be established.” If the primitive disciples had not believed that Christ designed to “endue them with power from on high,” and had not sought the blessing, they would not have received it. The reformed church believed that this *power* was peculiar to the primitive age—a purely miraculous gift—she did

cable perfection, and no creature possesses it in the same degree and manner that God does. God is eternally holy—the fountain of holiness. Creatures are holy by derivation. God is infinitely holy. Creatures are holy in a finite degree. God is immutably holy. But creatures, as it respects holiness, are liable to change.”—*Rev. Dr. Cogswell's Letters to Students.*

* All commentators, I believe, agree that the prediction in Rev. xix. 7, 8, refers to the millennial state of the church on earth; when “the marriage of the Lamb will come; and his espoused church, being purified from heresies, divisions, and anti-Christian corruptions, in doctrine, discipline, worship, and practice, will be made ready, and meet to be publicly owned by Him as his delight and his beloved.”—*Scott.*

not pray for it, and, consequently, she did not receive it. Christ gave her all she believingly asked for; and had she asked for more, she would have received more, even until her joy was full. Had she sought "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ," which is certainly all that primitive Christians enjoyed, her prayers would have been heard and answered by her Lord, and the same reason still prevails to keep the blessing out of the church. Few, comparatively, among her members believe in the baptism with the Holy Ghost, except so far as they received in regeneration: few pray for it: and, consequently, few receive it. It is not strange, then, that an unbelieving church has not received the blessing, since it is granted only to those who believe.

But miracles and the gift of tongues are supposed to have stood connected with this endowment of *power*. If the *power* is again granted the church, may we expect the primitive accompaniments also with it? I answer: All that received "the fulness of the blessing" did not work miracles; all did not speak with tongues, as is evident from 1 Cor. xii. 28—30; of course these gifts did not necessarily accompany the blessing. Besides, first the apostles, and then the seventy disciples, were empowered by Christ to work miracles, long before they were endued with this power;—see Matt. x. and Luke x.* "And these signs shall follow those that believe," said Christ: "they shall speak with tongues," &c. Now, evidently, multitudes

* When the disciples inquired of our Lord, Matt. xvii. 19, why they could not cure a certain severe case of lunacy, he answered them—"Because of your unbelief:" not, because you are not empowered so to do. He had previously authorized them to do such a work; but their success depended entirely upon the strength of their faith in his ability and grace to work with them. As "power from on high" made them "full of faith," as well as "full of the Holy Ghost," "unbelief," of course, would not subsequently prevent them from performing any miracle which the providence of God should open the way for their doing. All the miracle-working power, then, that they received by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, was the strengthening and perfecting their faith in the promises and presence of their Lord. It was their faith that, at all times, gave them the victory. In Mark xvi. 17, above quoted, it is expressly said that miraculous "signs" should "follow them that believe;" evidently not that every believer should perform every enumerated miracle: for Paul assures us that such was not the case, in 1 Cor. xii. 29, 30; but that faith was requisite for the performance of any one. The more perfect the faith, the more successful the performance. "Power from on high" rendered its subjects "full of faith;" consequently such as the Spirit employed were abundantly qualified to perform the assigned work.

believed on Christ to the saving of their souls, even in the primitive age, before they were baptized with the Holy Ghost; as was the case with the inhabitants of Samaria, and the twelve disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus; and many also, probably, never did receive the baptism until death, as is evident from Rom. i. 11. Miracles were never performed to gratify human curiosity, but only to prove the presence of Christ with his people. If they are never again called for, for this particular purpose, they will never again be wrought on earth. When Christ returns to build up Zion, as he certainly will return, he will make the nations to know that he is with his people, by the wonders he will enable them to do. "They shall have power to stop the windows of heaven that it rain not, and to afflict the earth with all plagues as often as they will;" for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

As to the *gift of tongues*, the diversity of language, which is the greatest hindrance to the propagation of the gospel on earth, was a special judgment of God for the presumption and sin of man. There was a peculiar propriety, then, in removing this hindrance out of the way of the primitive church, by an act as special as was that which at first produced it. Whether such a special interposition of Heaven will ever again be called for, is more than any man is authorized to say. The celebrated Archbishop Tillotson, as quoted by Matthew Henry, expressed the opinion two hundred years ago, that if men of honest intent, and "full of the Holy Ghost," were to go out to the heathen to preach Christ to them, no doubt he would as abundantly qualify them for their important work, as he did the primitive preachers of righteousness. What he will do in this relation we know not now; but it will be known when he shall return to build up Zion, and make her a praise in the whole earth.

REFLECTION I. *We see in the light of this subject why Christians so generally walk in darkness, and know so little of the love of Christ shed abroad in their soul.* They are not like primitive Christians, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" the "Comforter" is not so sensibly present with them. By the Spirit they have been led to feel that they are sinners, and need a Saviour; and also to seek the Lord and "strive to make their calling and election sure." But they have not received "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ," and, consequently, their "joy in the Lord is not full;"

neither are they able, with ancient "saints, to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God." They are generally strangers to those "joys which are unspeakable and full of glory," of which Peter speaks. The only power, then, that can render the modern church what ancient prophets predicted it should be, and what the primitive church was, is the *baptism with the Holy Ghost*, of which she is now evidently generally ignorant and destitute. And this *power from on high* would bring her "up out of the wilderness," and give her speedily the whole earth for a possession.

REFLECTION 2. *We see in the light of this subject why modern ministers and missionaries are no more successful in the great work assigned them by their Lord.* They are not, like primitive preachers, "endued with power from on high;" not, like them, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost;" and, consequently, not like them, eminently successful in the work of the Lord. I speak not this with slanderous intent of my brethren in the ministry. But who will pretend that the great body of them have that spirit of "entire consecration" to Christ that primitive preachers had? Or that, like them, they "preach in demonstration of the spirit and of power?"

The church, through her ministers, is now laboring in the stupendous work assigned her by her Lord, like Samson, shorn of his locks. She may have more than the strength of a man with her, but she has not "power from on high;" the strength of the living God; and she will labor, comparatively, in vain, until by faith she looks to Christ, and receives the *baptism of the Holy Ghost*. The command of Christ to every gospel minister still is, "Tarry ye—if not in Jerusalem, certainly at the throne of grace,—until ye be endued with power from on high."* And no one can successfully preach the

* "A man should be as much ashamed, and far more afraid, to enter the ministry unbaptized with the Holy Ghost, than he is to enter it unacquainted with the original languages of the holy scriptures." "Until preaching be itself a demonstration of the spirit and of power, its effects will neither be very great nor very good. It will win but few souls to Christ, and their character will not rise high in the beauty of holiness, nor in the zeal of love. They may just keep their name and their place in the church of the living God, but they will not be to him, nor to his church, 'for a name and an everlasting sign'" "Saying *what* Christ did is not enough for a minister; he should say it *as* Christ did."—*Philip's Life of Whitefield*.

gospel until he is endued with all the power peculiar to the gospel dispensation ; until he can come to sinful men in all "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." The Captain of our salvation is dishonored when his spiritual warriors go into the field to contend with "principalities and powers," without having on the whole armor of the gospel. In such case they go forth only to be defeated, and to bring reproach upon the sacred name by which they are called. The weapons of our warfare are the same now that they were when primitive preachers wielded them so successfully ; and it is but an abuse of the sovereignty of God to ascribe to him our want of success, if we labor without the "power from on high," which primitive Christians possessed. We can do as great things for Christ as they did, with the same endowment that they had. And greater things than they did, modern ministers must do, before the earth can be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. If the world is to be *literally* converted to Christ during the present century, eighty thousand converts a day, from this time to the year 1900, will barely suffice to do it, allowing for the changes made by births and deaths through two generations. And yet the church, with so stupendous a work before her, is contented to labor on without that "power from on high," which so eminently fitted the primitive disciples for their conflict with the powers of darkness. The Lord in mercy speedily return to his bleeding Zion, and cause her to "arise and shine, her light being come, and the glory of the Lord being risen upon her." "Then shall she break forth on the right hand and on the left, and converts shall again be multiplied as the drops of the dew." "Even so ; come Lord Jesus ; come quickly."

NOTE.—Since writing the above, I have, for the first time, seen and read the admirable work of REV. DR. SKINNER, entitled, "*The Religion of the Bible* ;"—from which I make the following extract : "The order of ministers needed for the conversion of the world, is one formed exactly, and in all respects,—except inspiration and the power to work miracles,—on the apostolical model. The same work substantially is to be done now, which was undertaken by the apostles ; and men as full of the strength and the graces of the Holy Spirit as they were, are apparently as indispensable. It is only when the appropriate business

of the church is misjudged of, that a doubt on this subject can be indulged. If that business was to keep up religion to the low common level to which it has attained among men, ministers of the common stamp might suffice : but to pervade the immense wastes of heathenism with the genuine spirit and influences of Christianity,—to have the gospel sounded throughout the countries of Europe, throughout China, Hindoostan, Burmah, Persia, Arabia, the coasts and unexplored recesses of Africa, and all the forests of America, and islands of the ocean, as it is in the most favored part of our own territory,—to achieve this end, men of the same spirit are wanted, as those who, under the direct commission of Christ, preached the word of salvation with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. Few such men, however, are now in the field. We have intelligent men, and pious men, and laborious men; but the work to be done demands men filled with all the fulness of God; men like Paul, and Brainard, not needing, from the abundance of the divine communications to their souls, to consult with flesh and blood; nor to depend on the sympathies of their brethren; but ready always to go, solitarily, if need be, into any desert part of the earth, trusting for support in Him who feedeth the young ravens when they cry. Such men, with few exceptions, the church has not obtained; and, is it not equally true, *that such men the church has not sought?* The church, straitened in herself, has had no just views of the immensity of her Lord's resources. Her faith, her desires, and her expectations have been proportional to her views. She has appeared to be afraid of excess in her requests, when in fact she has comparatively asked nothing in the name of Christ. Why should she not prepare herself to receive a ministry as large as the wants of man, and as excellent as that of the apostolical age? Let it not be thought incredible that such a ministry will yet be seen on earth. How slow is the course of the gospel, for want of preachers so replenished with grace, by the unction of the Holy Spirit. We have seen that in the midst of the unparalleled doings of these times, the cause of salvation may remain almost at a stand; nay, at the very centre and spring of action, there sometimes seems to be a backward movement. At best we struggle on, amidst mingled triumphs and defeats, hopes and fears. Not so advances the cause of evil, the work of destruction, among the souls of unevangelized and unconverted men. Is there never to be a change? Is there no help, no way to accelerate the work of recovering mercy? There is a way. Let Zion awake and stir herself up to take hold of the almighty hand of God. Let her sons and her daughters array themselves in those

shining garments of salvation, which made first Christians the wonder and the light of the world; let them give the Hearer of prayer no rest, until he send forth a ministry numerous as is wanted, and with qualifications such as were granted at the first. Here is the 'door,' and the only 'door of hope.' Truly if there ever was a period when the whole Christian world should be down upon their faces before the throne of mercy, imploring with all the importunity, and boldness, and perseverance of faith, a race of ministers, each full of the Holy Ghost, as was Barnabas or Paul, that period is the one which is now passing over us."

We consider the doctrine of the foregoing sermon of vast importance to the church. We had an article of the same import in our first volume. But as it was of ordinary length, it was necessarily far less explicit than the foregoing, which we are happy to present to our readers. It is full of interest. Brethren, read it, and read it again. And let us obtain the "power from on high:" then will our "peace be as a river, and our righteousness as the waves of the sea." EDS. GUIDE.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"Pray without ceasing."

This is the secret of holy living. Keep up a constant intercourse with thy Almighty Friend, who alone is thy strength to resist every temptation, and keep thee in the narrow way of holiness. Think none of thy concerns too small to mention to him. No sin is small, and, therefore, no temptation trifling. Remember he careth for thee. He notices the sparrow, and will he not much more care for thee? Yes, he careth for thee, or he had never been the Lamb slain for thy sins. *Pray without ceasing*, for thou wilt never be where thou hast no need of strength from him to aid thee. Let all thy actions be

performed as in the sunlight of his presence. Lay open every thought and feeling to his hallowed inspection, and let the union of thy soul with him, by constant prayer, be perfect, be entire. Thus wilt thou receive his breath into thine own, and breathe out purity as freely as thou breathest air.

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

There is a spiritual training of the understanding and heart, which is gained only in the school of Christ. Sitting down at the feet of Jesus, with the desire to know his will, *in order to do it*, the mind is enlightened, and the heart is cultivated in the knowledge of spiritual things. It is then we see light in his light. An ancient proverb says, "Shut the windows, that the house may be light." When we shut up our souls to God's teachings, renouncing our own wisdom as folly, it is then we *see* and *hear* and *feel God*. Thus discerning God, coming in contact with him, the soul increases in wisdom and spiritual understanding; light and more light, and still increasing light, as the soul is expanded to receive it, shines in, and God is studied, and God is known. This increase in the knowledge of God is the only bliss of the soul here, and is the soul's happiness in heaven. To know God, still knowing, and yet never known, is the lesson of eternity.

"The kingdom of God is within you."

As the sun rising scatters the shades of night, and makes the objects of nature visible, so when Jesus comes into the soul, the darkness of the mind is dispelled, the soul clearly discerns spiritual things, and is made happy in the possession of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Look not here, look not there, for the coming of Christ's kingdom, saying, Is the Gentile and the Jew brought in, but turn thine eye inward, and ask, Is the kingdom of God come within my own soul? One soul, and one only, hast thou the entire dominion over. Is the kingdom of God come there? "It is not meat and drink, external rites and observances, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Is Jesus enthroned in thy bosom, and is every discordant passion hushed to peace? Is thy will meekly subservient, yea, lost and blended in his will? Does every emotion in thy breast beat in unison with holiness? This is the reign of

Christ on earth, his reign in thy heart. O hasten the reign of righteousness on earth ; the reign of Jesus in the hearts of his people.

" Eat, O friends, drink ; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

Is this thy voice, O Jesus, and is the banquet all prepared, and are we welcome to the feast? Yes, it is thy voice, " Eat, O friends, drink abundantly, O beloved." Not as aliens, not as strangers, but as *friends*, as beloved ones, are we welcome to the feast. Greeted with the smile of thy approbation, we approach, we come, we cannot stay away. We sit down, and are refreshed. The love that beams from thy face sweetens all that we receive, and we cannot chide ourselves if we would, so unbounded, so free, seems thy compassion toward us. We can only eat, and adore ; fill our vessels, and come for more supplies, and still thy mercy is the same, ever flowing on, as constantly as our wants are recurring. God and man, how intimately connected, and how sweetly united by the golden chain of love. Severed, rent asunder by the fall, but extended again to man, through Jesus. He is the golden link that binds again the soul to God, and God becomes again *our* God, and *our* Father. Glory to God for Jesus, the rock of my salvation, on which I stand secure, upheld by the oath and the promise of God.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

MISTAKES ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

I. One error on this subject is, that we may *grow up into it*. That is, by conquering one sin after another, and by cultivating the fruits of the Spirit, we may, finally, arrive at the state of being " a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This is not being " sanctified by *faith*," as Paul's doctrine was. Acts xxvi. 18. It is not having " the heart purified *by faith*," but is rather sanctification by works.

It is true we should strive to conquer every sin, " especially that

which most easily besets us;" and we should also cultivate every grace, those in which we are most deficient, in particular; but we should do this, not as the unbelieving moralists do, by watchfulness and care merely, but by bringing them all to Christ, and receiving grace *by faith*, to be "perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

II. There is an idea, which we have often met, in certain classes in society, that if a man enjoys this blessing, he will be *eloquent*. If a minister, or member lives with the love "that casts out fear," he is expected to speak far better than other men. That he will speak better than he would, if he did not "love God with all his heart," is true. Still, like Moses, he may be deficient in utterance, or, like Paul, who professed to enjoy this blessing, (Phil. iii. 15,) his speech may be "contemptible."

III. Some, in seeking "perfect love," are expecting that it will give them *pathos*, that they will be like some they have known, persons of deep feeling. There are some who always show strong emotions,—others, who may have more of the "mind that was in the Saviour," and more of all of the fruits of the Spirit, whose feelings are always calm. The one is like the ocean, lashed into fury by the tempest's wrath, and the other like that same ocean, when no rude wind ruffles its bosom.

Strong animal feelings are constitutional with some, they cannot be otherwise if they would; while others, cast in a different mould, could not, if they would, show their interest in this way. Each has his peculiar characteristics given him by his Maker, and grace, though it sanctifies each, will no more make them alike than it will make their *countenances* alike. Each has his peculiar gift of God; let him be satisfied with having it "entirely sanctified."

IV. Another wrong idea, imbibed by many, is, that one of the most prominent evidences of a state of entire sanctification is *great joy*. That it most generally accompanies this state, is true; that it *necessarily* does, is an error; and that, of itself, it is a principal evidence of its attainment, is *far* from the truth. As Mr. Fletcher says, "It is *holiness*, not happiness, we want." Faith, living by faith, walking by faith; and that, every moment, is the great proof of this state. Often it is *great peace*, rather than joy, that marks its attainment. That there is great happiness to be enjoyed in this blessing,

is a truth we would have shining on our minds, with all the clearness of an unclouded meridian sun ; but that it is holiness—purely the image of Christ—that we should more especially seek, is an idea that we would have blazing in upon the mind with a strength and clearness that should eclipse the other.

V. But a still greater mistake is, to suppose that it is attained, in some degree, by *agonizing, wrestling, protracted prayer*. It is received and retained by faith *alone*. That we may sometimes have to protract our prayer, like Jacob, or like the Saviour, all night,—that we should never cease praying—is true. But the promise of scripture is, not to long, or earnest, or wrestling prayer, but “all things that ye ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive.” And whenever length, or zeal, or any thing else is substituted for the simple exercise of faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have “erred from the faith.”

It is in this blessing, as in justification, that one can have but very indistinct ideas of it by words ; experience only can make us thoroughly understand it. As the justified person generally finds the blessing differing in its nature from his anticipations, though as great as he expected, so the soul who is sanctified wholly, while he finds as great a blessing as he had looked for, yet in many respects it is not what he anticipated. God came in his own way, he gave the blessing, it may be “in a still voice,” while he was gazing at the “whirlwind.” Thus while God takes to himself the honor, he humbles the receiver, “lest he should be exalted, above measure, by the abundance of the revelations given unto him.”

Let this subject be but divested of the errors that now becloud the minds of Christians, as to its nature, and there would not be a humble follower of Christ, who would not embrace it as the very essence of the gospel.

Go on, then, with your Guide, till the whole Christian church is led from the dark mazes of error, to the light of Christian Perfection.

Nov. 1840.

J. M.

GUIDE

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RELIGIOUS MAXIMS

HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

XLVI.

If we wish to rise high in God, we must be willing to sink low in ourselves. It may seem like a contradiction in terms, but it is nevertheless true, that there is no elevation in true religion higher than that of profound humility. He that would be the greatest must become the least. He who was equal with God, condescended to become man. And it was the beloved Son of the Most High that washed the feet of the disciples.

XLVII.

It is not by the mere number of our words and actions, that we can most effectually serve the cause of God and glorify his name. It is the temper in which they are done, rather than the mere multiplication of them, which gives them power. It was the remark of a good man, who had much experience as a minister of the gospel, that "*we mar the work of God by doing it in our own spirit.*"

XLVIII.

Many persons seem to be more solicitous for *strong* emotions than for *right* emotions. It would perhaps be a fair representation of their state to say the burden of their prayer is, that their souls may be like "the chariots of Amminadib;" or that, like Paul, they may be caught up into the third heavens. They seem desirous, perhaps almost unconsciously to themselves, to experience or to do some *great* as well as some *good* thing. Would it not be better for them, in a more chastened and humble temper of mind, to make it the burden and emphasis of their supplication, that they may be meek, forbearing, and forgiving; that they may have a willingness to wash the disciples' feet, and have great love even for their enemies; in a word, that they may bear the image of Christ, who came not with observation, but was "*meek and lowly of heart?*"

XLIX.

It is quite possible for a man to possess evidence of sanctification, who is tempo-

rarily destitute of joyful and rapturous emotions. But it is not possible for a man to possess such evidence, who is destitute of a living, operative, and effective conscience. On no part of our nature does sanctification work greater effects than on the conscience. It may be said to give it an intensity and multiplicity of existence; so that, like the flaming sword of the cherubims, it turns every way and guards the tree of life.

L.

The man who is troubled at great sins, particularly such as involve a degree of notoriety, but finds himself slightly affected and troubled in the commission of small or hidden ones, has but little claim to the grace of sanctification. One of the surest marks of sanctification is an increased sensitiveness to sin in all its degrees. The slightest sin is a source of unspeakable misery to the sanctified heart; and gives the soul no rest, till it is washed out in overflowing tears of penitence.

LI.

In a state of mere justification, it is often and perhaps generally the case, that it requires a great mental effort to turn our thoughts and affections from worldly objects, and to fix them promptly and firmly upon God. In a state of sanctification, it is the reverse of this. To a holy heart the difficult and painful effort is to turn away its thoughts and affections from the supreme object of its love, and to fix them, even when duty authorizes it, upon objects of an inferior nature.

LII.

Persons sometimes miss of the blessing of sanctification by aiming at it, not being aware of the artifices of the adversary, in what may perhaps be called an unsanctified manner. We are not to desire sanctification, which is probably the case with some, merely because it is an elevated and honorable state of soul, and in point of rank far above any other mortal condition, but because it is the only true and worthy consummation of our moral and religious existence, and especially because it is the will of our heavenly Father.

LIII.

All persons are willing to be justified, because all are willing to be saved. But all are not willing to be sanctified, because all are not willing to renounce the pleasures of the world.

LIV.

A spirit of entire obedience is one of the important characteristics of a sanctified state. Not obedience merely, but *entire* obedience. He who obeys in some things, but is fretful and rebellious in others, has not the reality; and it can hardly be said that he has even the appearance of holiness.

LV.

He that is united to God, loves solitude. But it is solitude in the relative rather than the absolute sense. True, he is secluded from men, but while he is shut out from the world he is shut up in God; and in the absence of human society, has the far better society of the infinite mind.

LVI.

"*Little love, little trust*," says Archbishop Leighton. The converse of this is equally true. If there be but little trust, there will be but little love. If we believe the words of our heavenly Father with the whole heart, it will be certain that we shall love him with the whole heart.

LVII.

Sanctification consists in LOVE rather than in KNOWLEDGE. Nevertheless, it

is a great and delightful truth, that those who love much, shall know much. They shall be led to the very heights of knowledge. Love shall bring light. The great God himself will be their teacher.

LVIII.

How pleasant, how delightful is a holy imagination ! It instinctively refuses and throws away every thing that can defile. It is a sort of inner sanctuary ; or perhaps we may call it the bridal chamber of the soul, fitted up and adorned with every thing pure in earth and beautiful in heaven. And God himself is the bright light thereof.

LIX.

"*Let not your heart be troubled.*" And in regard to those who indulge the hope that they are sanctified in Christ Jesus, we may well inquire, why should their heart be troubled ? Have they not a great protector ? Must not the archers first hit Him, whom thy soul loveth, before they can hit thee ? "What can harm thee," says archbishop Leighton, who spoke on these things from the fullness of his own pious spirit, "when all must first touch God, within whom thou hast enclosed thyself?"

LX.

It is a great art in the Christian life, to LEARN TO BE SILENT. Under oppositions, rebukes, injuries, STILL BE SILENT. It is better to say nothing, than to say it in an excited or angry manner, even if the occasion should seem to justify a degree of anger. By remaining silent, the mind is enabled to collect itself, and to call upon God in secret aspirations of prayer. And thus you will speak to the honor of your holy profession, as well as to the good of those who have injured you, *when you speak from God.*

LXI.

It is important to make a distinction between sorrow and impatience. We may feel sorrow without sin ; but we can never feel impatience without sin. Impatience always involves a want of submission ; and he who is wanting in submission, even in the smallest degree, is not perfect before God.

LXII.

We may lay it down as a principle in the religious life, that every thing is wrong, in regard to which we cannot ask the divine direction and blessing. When we sin, we wish, like our first parents, to hide ourselves from Him whom we have offended. But it is the nature of a pure heart, always to seek God. Its language is, in all the occurrences and duties of life, "My Father, what wilt *thou* have me to do?"

LXIII.

A Christian is prospectively a citizen of heaven ; but actually, and at the present time, he is a citizen of the world. Remember this, and do not think so much of what *is to be* as to forget what *is*. We have a great work in the present life, and in the precise situation where God has placed us. Angels glorify God in heaven ; men must glorify him on the earth.

LXIV.

Many profess religion ; many, we may charitably hope, possess religion ; but few, very few, if we may judge from appearances, are aiming with all their powers at perfection in religion. Nevertheless, it is only upon this last class, that the Saviour looks with unmingled approbation. In regard to all those who aim at any thing

short of bearing his full image, it may be said with truth, that he is wounded in the house of his friends.

LXV.

If we would walk perfectly before God, we must endeavor to do common things, such as are of every day's occurrence, and of but small account in the eyes of the world, in a perfect manner. Some persons are so mentally constituted, that they could more easily undergo the sufferings of martyrdom, than properly regulate and control their feelings in their families during twenty-four hours. How dreadful is that delusion, which excuses itself in its imperfections, because in the providence of God, it is not permitted to do or to suffer some great thing. Happy is he who can do God's will in the solitary place, and who can win the crown without going to the stake.

LXVI.

It is a most dangerous mistake to suppose that we can compensate, by exterior acts, however important they may be, for a want of interior devotion. Men may even minister at the altar, with all the outward eloquence of a Massillon, and yet with hearts full of unbelief. A want of a right or perfect state of the outward action may expose us to the condemnation of men; but an imperfection of the inward or spiritual action exposes us to the condemnation of God. If we can please both God and men, it is well; but above all things, let us not fail to please God, who, in opposition to the course which men usually take, regards the inward principle much more than the mere outward development of it.

LXVII.

If we fail on suitable occasions to declare what God has done for our souls, we shall be likely to offend our heavenly Father. But on the other hand, if we make such declarations, Satan will be likely to be present and tempt us to spiritual pride. Happy is the man who can relate and extol God's gracious dealings with him, with such meekness and humility, as to furnish no entrance to evil. T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXPERIENCE OF A LADY.

It is more than two years since my mind became much interested in the subject of personal holiness—a subject to which, at that time, the attention of the religious community was particularly directed. I was entirely dissatisfied with the attainments I had made in religion, and fully aware that I was not living wholly for Christ—that there was too much conformity to the world, and too little of the “fruits of the Spirit” manifest in my life. My soul thirsted for holiness, as the only means of usefulness or happiness, and I sought it earnestly in prayer. I obtained at that time increased nearness to God and uncommon peace of mind, which I enjoyed for several weeks—but it

was not abiding. A few months after, at a religious meeting, I became acquainted with the experience of some who professed sanctification. Being myself of the Congregational order, the subject was in a great measure new to me. I was deeply affected with the statements made of their religious exercises, and felt that such a work of grace as they described was just what I needed, and entirely beyond any thing I had experienced. From this time I became much interested to inform myself respecting the doctrine of "Christian Perfection," and examined the Scriptures and other books in reference to it, having my heart much set on obtaining the victory over sin, if such were my privilege. I found much encouragement to enlarge my desires, from the precious promises of the Bible; and determined never to rest till I could appropriate to myself the language of Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me*," &c. My hungerings after righteousness were greatly increased, and also my hopes in regard to it, by reading the Memoir of J. B. Taylor. As I contemplated his elevated piety and exalted joys, my whole soul panted for like attainments; yet, notwithstanding my efforts, I seemed for a while "nothing bettered, but rather grew worse."

After the lapse of several months, a revival commenced among us, and my anxiety for advancement in holiness increased. I felt that I was unprepared to labor for the conversion of others till my own soul should be set at liberty, and that my first duty was to myself. My mind became exceedingly burdened. I was convinced that I must make a new and *entire* consecration of myself to God, yet shrunk from such a total surrender. I sometimes felt that if the Lord would make some communication to my soul, as a pledge that he was ready to meet me, and would grant sufficient grace in case I entered into such solemn covenant to be his, I could then venture to engage to live henceforth for him alone; but, through weakness of faith, I dared not venture forward upon his naked promise. No such aid to my faith, however, was granted me. I saw that the surrender must be unconditional, and became overwhelmed with the intensity of my feelings. In this state, having retired one evening for prayer, I deliberately surveyed the whole subject of an entire consecration to Christ—counted the cost, and laid the peculiar difficulties, which I apprehended in my own case, before the Lord—and then, as I believe, by the help of God, surrendered myself to him without reserve, to be his for ever. I arose from prayer relieved from the burden which had oppressed me; but my mind, though calm and peaceful, was shrouded in darkness, and scarce a ray of light gleamed across my path. Nearly the same state of mind continued through the succeeding day; yet I had reason to believe that God was with me, granting me unusual aid against temptation. The next day there was

a great increase of my peace. I found my faith much strengthened, and felt satisfied that God was with me of a truth, and that he had accepted the sacrifice which he had enabled me to make. The day following, which was Sabbath, the little rivulet of my peace had swelled to a river, and my heart was filled with the love of God. I had a delightful consciousness of his presence, and was so absorbed in holy contemplation and communion with my Saviour, as scarcely to be sensible of what was passing around me. I was remarkably assisted in every duty, and the hours glided sweetly by. Thus my evidence of acceptance, and my joy in the Lord, increased daily. I had little disposition for food or sleep; and during the wakeful hours of night, quite unlike to my former experience, my mind was intensely occupied with devout meditation and prayer.

As weeks and months passed by, I discovered more and more the value of the blessing I had received. I continued to enjoy a sweet serenity of soul, a calm submission to the will of God and trust in his fatherly care, (which shielded me from every thing like anxiety or disappointment,) an abiding sense of his presence, and access to him free and delightful as that of a child to a parent. I found his yoke indeed easy and his burden light, beyond what I had ever understood before; and was taught by daily experience, that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths peace." At two or three different times in my past life, (for I had been a professor of religion thirteen years,) I had walked with God and enjoyed great peace of mind for some days or perhaps weeks together; but had always suffered much fear of soon losing the narrow path—which fear had in every instance been realized—but now, I had such filial confidence in God, such love, as almost cast out fear. He seemed to me not like a hard master, watching for my halting, but a loving father, always ready to lend his aid, and better to me continually than my expectations: and his goodness, so abundantly manifested, drew from my heart corresponding returns of love and gratitude to him, such as I never knew before. I felt that I could make any sacrifice for his sake, and should "rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." I could cheerfully renounce the world, and the good opinion even of those whose esteem I had most highly valued, when it came in competition with my Saviour's love. I was willing to incur reproach and have my name cast out as evil; yea, to be counted a fool, if necessary, for Christ's sake—and delighted to pledge myself anew from day to day, to perform any service to which he should call me.

It is now not far from a year since I received this great blessing, and I feel that I can never sufficiently praise the Lord for what he has done for me. I have ever since abode under the shadow of the Almighty, and had constant experience of his faithfulness and loving

kindness. Surely it is not a vain thing to serve God. He still vouchsafes to me his presence, and an abiding, blissful peace, which is indescribable. I have passed through some seasons of severe trial, being in great "heaviness through manifold temptations;" but at such times I have been distinctly conscious of divine support: there has been a deep-seated tranquillity, which I think has never left me, and an unwavering confidence in the love of God, which has sometimes enabled me to bless and praise him, from my inmost soul, for his dealings with me, even while his hand was heavy upon me. I could adopt as never before, the beautiful language of the psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? hope thou in God, for *I shall yet praise him.*" I recur with gratitude to the memorable day to which I have referred, as the time when my feet were taken from the miry clay and set upon a rock; when I was enabled to present myself "a living sacrifice" to God, henceforth to be wholly devoted to his service. Since then, I think I have felt continually that I am not my own, and have sought to glorify God in my "body and spirit, which are his." I have kept in view the direction, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God;" and have felt that it is perfectly practicable, by the help of God, to obey this command. I have loved daily to repeat my vows to be the Lord's; and my heart has responded to the words of the psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee." I have been led to seek the guidance of the Spirit in all my concerns—temporal and spiritual—and have learned how sweet it is to cast all my care on him who careth for me. The most prominent feature of my experience has been a cordial submission in all things to the will of God; which, together with a clear perception of his overruling providence, even in the most minute events, has reconciled me to every situation, and produced, at all times, that contented mind which is "a continual feast." I have often been surprised at the strength afforded me against temptation, and have sometimes felt that I had nothing to do but to "stand still and see the salvation of God." Since I have learned to look simply to Christ for grace, instead of depending in a great measure on my own efforts, I find it is very easy for him to work that in me which I had been vainly seeking for years, (though not aware at the time of my self-dependence,) to effect in myself; and since his gracious interpositions bring new evidence of his love and faithfulness, I do, with St. Paul, "glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." It is my constant prayer that I may grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ; for I have learned, more than ever before, that in him is all my salvation; that he is an overflowing fountain, and his fulness a mine of inexhaustible wealth to those that believe in him.

In all past years, there has been at times an aching void in my heart which nothing on earth could fill ; but since the date of my recent experience, I have not for a moment been conscious of that painful sense of want, but have ever found the promise verified, " Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

While I thus recur with gratitude to the past, I would by no means rest in present attainments. It is the height of my ambition to press forward in the heavenly race—to get clearer views of the glory of the Saviour, and thereby be " changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

It may be that these professions may expose me to the charge of boasting ; but could the accuser look, as God does, at the heart, I think he would see his mistake ; boasting is excluded—by the law, not of works, but of faith. I see this far more clearly than when I was under the dominion of a legal spirit ; and so deep is my sense of obligation to rich, unmerited grace, that I can hardly conceive of being so misunderstood. It will be found, I think, that where man may judge thus harshly, God sees only the promptings of duty, and a desire to bear some feeble testimony for Christ, that others may be induced to drink at the same fountain, and secure for themselves a like blessing. The poor, helpless orphan, that should tell to his companion in misery the story of another's generosity, who had supplied all his wants without money or price, and was ready to do the same for him, would hardly be accused of boasting. It would seem that gratitude to his benefactor, and a benevolent desire for the happiness of his friend, must prompt to such a course.

It is in the hope that my humble testimony to the freeness of divine grace, bestowed on me, most unworthy, may be the means of encouraging some poor, famishing soul to avail himself of the fulness of Christ, that I make this communication. It is my sincere desire and fervent prayer that the church may arise and shine, clothed in her Redeemer's righteousness, that the lives of its members may be, in all respects, consistent with their professions. Then will the grand obstacle to the progress of religion be removed, when all who profess to live under its influence, shall feel and exhibit its power ; then, also, will complaints of coldness and unfruitfulness be exchanged for the cheering words of the apostle, " Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world."

E. C.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.—TEMPTATION.

DEAR BROTHER MERRITT,—Such are the dangers attending the Christian pilgrim in his homeward journey through this wilderness world, that he needs all the assistance which can be obtained from every possible source. A plain declaration of the way and means by which others have obtained and retained victory over sin and the devil, has done much good to many souls, in helping them onward in their journey. I purpose briefly to tell you and others how I manage to shun the rocks and quicksands. I shall speak principally of my temptations. Sometimes after excessive labor in mind or body I become in some measure inactive, and do not feel all that devotion in my soul I do at other times, while engaged in the means of grace. The devil at such times, with seeming interest, inquires, “Where is now the blessedness you lately spake of?” Believing it to be of the devil, (not knowing as I had grieved the Spirit,) I tell him at once, *It is in my soul*, beyond his power. But saith he, “If you were sanctified, you would always feel the same joy of soul and fervor of spirit.” But as he never was a sanctified sinner, saved by the blood of Christ in an earth born state, I conclude that he is a liar, and not capable of instructing, nor disposed to lead the followers of Jesus in the way to heaven. So I *resist* him, and give myself afresh to Jesus, and he sweetly assures me that I am his. My faith is sufficiently strong to believe that “He is *able* to keep that which I have committed into his hands against that day.”

Sometimes after doing with my might what my hands found to do, in building up the church in holiness, and for the conversion of precious souls from the bondage of sin, the devil will whisper in my ear, saying, “Now I suppose you think you have done something pleasing to God and injurious to me?” Suspicious of his object, I tell him *I hope I have*. If not, I am resolved to try again, the Lord being my helper, until I do. In my retired moments at night, while examining my conduct during the past day, and inquiring, “Have I done all for God and the good of souls? the devil intimates sometimes, very softly and with apparent approbation, that I have done *well*. Saith he, “The church are very well pleased with your labors. God cannot but approve of your works. You ought to be favorably received and respectfully regarded; unless you are thus treated, they do not deserve, and are not worthy of your labors.” But in this I see his device. He is trying to get me to look at self and lose sight of the Saviour. I have learned that any thing, however pleasing in the appearance, full in the promise, or rich in the possession, which has

a direct or indirect tendency to turn me away from looking to the Author and Finisher of my faith, is dangerous in the commencement, progress, and result. I then renew my act of entire consecration to Christ, and look for the fulfilment of the blessed promises. "The Lord preserveth all them that love him;" and "He preserveth the souls of his saints." I believe that Christ, my Saviour, feels a deeper interest for me than I feel for myself; and has, by his death, purchased grace sufficient for every exigence of mine, while in the world.

Faith in my Saviour supplies me with all necessary grace, gives me victory over sin and Satan, keeps the fire of God's love burning in my heart, so that I am enabled to understand the Apostle John, where he says, "But he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not;" and the meaning of the wise man, when he says, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." It is comforting to me to reflect, in temptation's darkest hour, that Jesus loves me, and feels an intense interest for my eternal welfare. I find this to be a sure antidote for despondency. David says, "Many are thy thoughts which are to usward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them."

When I have a work to perform for God, I think that Jesus knows all about it; and as he is interested for me, he surely will assist me. When I am tempted, I reflect. Jesus knows it, and knows what sore temptations mean, for he hath felt the same. When the world frowns and fails to assist me, I remember the words of Jesus: "I have overcome the world;" and consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, and it gives me strength. Christ surely loves his own body, his own flesh and bones. "For ye are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Afflicted, tempted believer, consider, in all your conflicts, Christ has you in his heart: he remembers you: he never forgets you, especially in your sorest conflicts. Glory to God for the gift of the Saviour.

South Wellfleet, Dec., 1840.

NATHAN RICE.

A brother in New York has kindly furnished us with the following letter for the Guide. It is good news.

Philadelphia, Dec. 3, 1840.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—It is with feelings of great emotion that I attempt to address you this morning. My heart is so overpowered with love to Christ, it is almost impossible for me to give expres-

sion to my feelings. In will endeavor, in the strength of God, to declare forth in this epistle to you his marvellous doings for my soul since we last saw each other. How wonderful and mysterious, and yet how simple, are the ways of the Lord in his dealings with his children. How true it is, O Lord, that "thy ways are not our ways, nor thy thoughts our thoughts." I desire, my dear brother, to give you a short history of my case, that you may understand my state more fully. I have been a professor of religion nearly five years, and have for a long portion of that time lived in spiritual gloom and darkness. My whole Christian life seemed to be a round of duties which I had to perform. Notwithstanding I had seasons in which my enjoyment was greater than at others, yet I lived in a partial discharge of my religious duties, more from conscience' sake than from any real enjoyment in them. But it was my delight to mingle in the society of Christians, and to have no fellowship with the ungodly. In short, I have lived a professor of religion, walking all my days as a Christian under condemnation through unbelief, and anticipated but little difference from this state while I lived.

When my mind troubled me from reading some passages of divine truth, and I was unable to feel its spirit, I have sought the experience of some Christian friends, and frequently found their feelings corresponding with my own; and then I would settle down under the conviction that all was right with me, and that the bright and precious privileges, mentioned in God's word, are of that glowing character which are not to be attained in this life. Thus I have been walking amidst hope and fear up to Thursday or Friday of last week, the day on which I received Mr. Fitch's communication.

And O! my dear brother, I cannot find language sufficient to express my gratitude to God and to you for this blessed book. It has been the instrument under God of causing me to know, by happy experience, what it is to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart; to know that peace of mind that passeth all understanding; that joy in the Holy Ghost, that faith which works by love that purifies the heart and overcomes the world; what it is to be a new creature in Christ; to know there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; to hold sweet communion with God; to have his reconciling countenance resting upon me; to have a sweet confiding love in his promises, and to know his love to be an everlasting love; that we can live in the sunshine of his love all the day long. Yes, my dear brother, it has given me to realize that all his precious promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. My feelings I cannot describe; and I rejoice that I have not to explain them to you, for you know them by happy and blessed experience. The day I received the pamphlet, I commenced reading; and as I advanced, I found myself

agitated with strange emotions. I felt feelings of a new character, to which I was an entire stranger. Yet it was all in such strict conformity with the word of God that my apprehensions increased. This state of mind led me immediately to prayer: I went upon my knees before God; and if I ever prayed before, I did then, that God would search my heart, that he would cleanse me from all indwelling sin; that my unbelief might be put far away, and that I might be delivered from whatever yet remained in my heart that prevented me from enjoying the pure love of Christ in the soul; that I might be brought into the glorious liberty of the gospel; that Christ might be made to me the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely; that I might have a perfect deadness to the world, and be made alive unto righteousness. Thus I prayed and continued in prayer at repeated times, without having any definite answer to my prayers. Yet I found great liberty in pleading before God, different from what I had ever before experienced, with a great increase of faith. Thus I remained until Sabbath morning dawned upon me, and with it the Lord appeared to me. On that morning he did of a truth reveal himself to my waiting soul, and for the first time was I able to say, "my Lord and my God," without the shadow of doubt, and without unbelief. O! I was made indeed a new creature in Christ Jesus; I did indeed sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and my soul rejoiced with joy that was "unspeakable and full of glory." O! if I had a thousand tongues I could use them all in his praise. I have given you a brief outline of my experience. I have not the ability to describe my feelings, but I know of a truth, my brother, that Christ is formed in my soul the hope of glory. O! for a holy living life and conversation; through Christ we can do it. How good it is to speak one with another on the way: it leads to edification. Communicate my state to all our dear friends in the Lord. I wish to subscribe for the *Guide*. Please do it for me, and let me know the cost in your letter of instruction to me, which I wait anxiously for. I would also willingly pay for a dozen copies such as you sent me for distribution. I consider it a great treasure. Brother H. has read it, and tells me he once had this love; he does not now enjoy it, but knows the way and is determined to seek it again. Mr. P. is now perusing it. I am reading Fletcher on Christian Perfection, and find it a source of great consolation and instruction. I think the Lord is about visiting our church in great mercy. To-morrow is set apart as a day of fasting. Last night I had a rich time in confessing my Lord before my brethren. The Lord makes his children speak out for him. I was overwhelmed with sensations which for some time prevented utterance; but I bless the Lord it was with joy and not with grief. I cannot write more at present.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

As Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, so every true believer counts all other glorying void, but glorying in the cross. The cross of Jesus, the burden which he imposes, is the crucifixion of sin and self; a dying to sin, that we may live to righteousness. Glorious cross; what riches, what treasures centre in thee! What fullness of meaning in the cross, "for whosoever shall lose his life shall find it." By the cross is not only the death of sin, but the opening up of immortal life. Peace of soul, rest of spirit, cannot be found in the ways of sin, in the possession of the world; but it is found in the cross of Christ, by which we become dead to sin, dead to the world, and alive to God. Happy is he who has become dead to himself; who seeks not himself, but Christ; who aims alone to please Him in all that he does and says; who, casting his eye around on all the allurements of the world, can reject them as unhesitatingly as did our Lord and Saviour, our glorious Leader. O what a pattern do we find in Jesus of crucifixion to the world. Well may we glory to tread in the steps of Jesus, the Lord from heaven. Thanks, O our Father, for the privilege of living in conformity to the life of Jesus! Thanks, that we may glory, not in gold and silver, shining metals, which the fire from heaven will one day consume as dross, but in the cross of Christ, by which we gain a meetness, a preparation to enjoy thy presence here, and an assured hope of a more full enjoyment of thee hereafter.

Seeing Jesus.

Jesus, to thee, the Lord of glory, the light of the world, I turn mine eyes. The bright beauties of earth fade away, as I see thee. Thanks, O my Father, for trees and flowers, and running brooks, and feathered songsters; thanks for the ocean, great and wonderful, the ever living, moving water; thanks for the sun and moon and stars; but greater thanks, but higher praise, for Jesus, my Saviour. O Jesus, thou art the theme, the book, leaf after leaf of which shall be unfolding through all eternity. Be it my highest aim to increase in the knowledge of thee, and to grow in conformity to thy likeness. Thy glorious perfections, O Jesus, are they to be shadowed forth in us; are we to reflect thine own brightness? Yes, the glory given thee, thou hast given us. Shall I, then, *look within* to see Jesus? Yes, there look to find the shining excellence of his own nature, his

humility, his love, his purity, and never let me be satisfied with seeing aught else but Jesus in my soul. I myself am a worm, an atom, once tossed on the wings of vanity and pride, paying homage to self, and rendering thee but shadowy praise. But now I have seen thee, I abhor myself, I love only thee, I pray only to be changed into thine image.

"I am the light of the world."

There is a glory in the sun and moon and stars. Our eyes love to behold nature lighted up by the bright beams of the sun; nor is the scene less resplendent under the feeble light of the moon. But what are all the beauties of nature to a soul in ruins, and conscious of its immortality? Nature is beautiful, and my soul has often delighted itself in her beautiful objects; but until the day dawned, and the day star arose in my heart; until I knew Jesus, the light of my soul, the restorer of my soul, I never saw beauty, I knew not glory. There is beauty in holiness which language fails to express. Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, shining into the heart, with healing in his beams, this is beauty, this is glory. Glory surpassing what eye hath seen, or ear heard, or the natural heart conceived. It is sweeter to drink in one pure ray from God, one beam of holiness, than to enjoy a life time of natural emotions from natural objects. O, Jesus, thou art the light of the world, because the light of the soul, the restorer of the soul. Thine own pure image may be reflected from souls once all black by reason of sin. I hear a voice, coming from Jehovah the Great I AM; in view of thy sacrifice it says, "Now will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your idols, from all your filthiness, will I cleanse you." O may the eyes of the whole church be turned to Jesus, and be turned within, looking for the fulfilment of this gracious promise. The blessing will come, it will not tarry, when the hand of faith shall grasp it with that unbending energy which determines never to cease its hold until the blessing comes.

"Thy will, O God, not mine, be done."

Why, O Christian disciple, is thy soul disquieted? When the storm threatens, and the sea swells, why art thou so fearful? Hast thou submitted *all* to God? Is Jesus indeed the keeper of thy soul? By a full surrender of thyself to him, hast thou engaged him to be thy *Friend*? Then does not his own hand direct the shaft that points to thy bosom; and can he not temper the wind to the shorn lamb? O, wert thou his *unreservedly*, the storm would soon become a calm, and the shaft rebound. It is thy unsubdued will that makes the little hill a mountain. Submit thy will, and the way is made smooth. Jesus going before thee, Jesus going with thee, and thou leaning on his bosom, knowing no will but his, thus mayest thou tread in the

calm quiet of an even pathway. Yea, more; thou wilt sometimes mount, and leaping up, thy spirit will take wings, and poise itself, gazing into heaven. Jesus will take thee to the Mount of Vision, and thou wilt tread with golden sandals where Moses and Elias are. O then sacrifice thy will, give up thyself, thy whole self to Jesus, and thou wilt have peace and rest, and joy of spirit. In the small, no less than in the great events of life, say, "Thy will be done." In the storm and in the calm, in light or in darkness, let thy soul's pulsation beat, *Thy will be done*. In the depths of extreme anguish, of which no human heart can conceive,—when the heavy load of a world of sinners was laid upon the Son of God,—he prayed *submissively*, Thy will, not mine, be done.

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

TO WHAT EXTENT IS A STATE OF ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION SINLESS?

MR. EDITOR,—I think correct views of Christian holiness are important in order to seek it successfully. And the means of instruction upon this subject are abundant. We have the Bible, and the writings of Wesley, Fletcher, Mahan, and many others who have enjoyed the blessedness of this state in their own souls, and described it very clearly. And in view of the light shed upon this subject by God's word, the writings and experience of Christians, it seems that no one need to err respecting it. But does not the opposition to Christian holiness from many who profess to be Christians, originate in a misapprehension of its nature? I am inclined to the opinion that the *real* difference among Christians upon the subject, is less than the *apparent* difference; and that when those who have not as yet embraced the doctrine of Christian perfection come to understand the light in which it is viewed by those who have already embraced it, much, if not all, their opposition to it will cease. For who, that has the spirit of Christ in his heart, can oppose the holiness which Christ taught and requires? Many attach ideas to the terms, "perfect," and "perfection," which those who use these terms in speaking of Christian holiness, do not intend to convey. And, perhaps, language has sometimes been used, in speaking of the doctrine and experience of holiness, which has had a tendency to mislead those who have bad prejudices against it. And that prejudice has been confirmed by the supposition that those who believe this doctrine, believe and teach that it is our privilege to arrive at a state in this life which is abso-

lutely sinless. Some, sincerely no doubt, misapprehend the true doctrine upon this point. Mr. Wesley says, "It is certain 'there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,'—that believe in him, and in the power of that faith 'walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Yet can they no more bear the justice of God now, than before they believed. This pronounces them to be still worthy of death. And it would absolutely condemn them thereto, were it not for the atoning blood."

And Mr. Watson, speaking upon this subject, says, "This petition ('and forgive us our trespasses') is still relevant to the entirely sanctified and the evangelically perfect, since neither the perfection of the first man, nor that of angels, is in question, that is, a perfection measured by the perfect law, which, in its obligations, contemplates all creatures as having sustained no injury by moral lapse, and admits, therefore, of no excuse from infirmities and mistakes of judgment, nor of any degree of obedience below that which beings, created naturally perfect, were capable of rendering. There may, however, be an entire sanctification of a being rendered *naturally* weak and *imperfect*, and so liable to mistake and infirmity, as well as to defect, in the *degree* of that absolute obedience and service which the law of God, never bent or lowered to human weakness, demands from all. These defects, and mistakes, and infirmities, may be quite consistent with the entire sanctification of the soul, and the *moral* maturity of a being still *naturally* infirm and imperfect."

When a person, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, discovers the impurity and corruption that still exists in the heart of one who is justified, and at the same time beholds the provision made by the sufferings and death of Christ for the perfect cleansing of the heart from all defilement, and by faith appropriates the great and precious promises of God's word, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, to his own soul, inward purity is obtained. And while we rely by simple faith on the great atonement, and aim in every thought, and word, and deed, to please and glorify God, purity of heart is retained and enjoyed. But still there may be *natural* infirmities and weaknesses, and defects, for which the perfect law of God, in the language of Wesley, would condemn the soul to death, were it not for the atoning blood. But as "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," faith in his blood saves from sin, by which otherwise the soul would be defiled. When measured by the perfect law of God, these defects must be pronounced sins, (and in this sense no one is sinless;) but still while we live by faith in Christ, this faith saves from condemnation and impurity. Could we of ourselves fully keep God's holy law, we should not every moment need the merits of the death of Christ; but as we cannot in our present state do this, provision has been made by the atonement, whereby

full salvation—complete deliverance from all sin—may be obtained and held fast in this life. While, therefore, legal perfection is unattainable in this life, evangelical or Christian perfection is the privilege of every child of God.

And as your labors are devoted to the promotion of this precious work, may you be instrumental in *guiding* many of the people of God to the attainment and enjoyment of this heavenly treasure.

Wales, Mass., Jan. 4, 1841.

W. G.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

“CONFESSION OF EXPERIENCE.”

It is with reluctance that I offer the following for publication, but having been solicited by my friends to do so, I have at last consented. I am fully aware of my utter inability to offer any thing that shall prove either useful or instructive; but, not knowing but a confession of my humble experience may prove, by the blessing of God, a matter of *encouragement* to some of the youthful readers of your pages, I briefly submit the same to you, to be published or not, at your discretion.

When about sixteen years of age, I trust that God, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins. I neglected to connect myself with any church, until about a year afterwards; I then joined the M. E. Church. The situation in which I was then placed was any thing but favorable to my advancement in the cause of piety. I was surrounded by youthful associates, who regarded not the things of religion, and, although not openly vicious, were filled with pride and vanity. It is then not much to be wondered at, that I soon declined into a state of coldness and inactivity. I offer this not as an apology, for young as I then was, I well knew, that let others do as they might, it was *my* duty to live soberly and righteously. Some months after, I was baptized; and this, I believe was the beginning of better days with me. Soon after this, I removed to Sudbury, Mass., at which place our brother Boyden was then preaching. Previous to this, I had heard but little said upon sanctification, and had read still less. Brother B. enjoyed the blessing, and was instant in urging it upon the Church. I believe that from him I heard the *first* sermon that I ever heard upon the subject. To me, it was a convincing one. I immediately became convinced that this was something which I did not enjoy. I began to search my Bible, to converse with Christians, and to pray much upon the subject. In my Bible I read, “Without

holiness no man shall see the Lord ;” and again, “Be ye holy,” &c. Many of my Christian friends exhorted me to strive to become holy, and the Spirit of God whispered, while I prayed in secret, “Thou art called unto holiness.”

I had, in common with many others, conceived the opinion, that this blessing was only to be enjoyed by persons of such master minds as were possessed by a Wesley, a Bramwell, a Fletcher, and others equally great and renowned; and had therefore, as too many are now doing, satisfied myself with a *medium* share of enjoyment.—When I heard brother B. urge upon each individual member of the church, to seek for *entire* holiness of heart, and heard many of the brothers and sisters tell how the blood of Jesus as applied to *their* hearts, washed from “all sin,” I was, as before observed, convicted, and cried unto the Lord in the bitterness of my soul, to make *me* also, entirely *His*. My friends all took a deep interest in my case, especially my sister-in-law, with whom I boarded; and often did she urge my suit at the throne of grace, and earnestly entreat, that my youthful soul might be filled with the fullness of that gospel, which had so effectually saved *her*. But, notwithstanding all the exertions of myself and friends, my trouble of mind daily increased. Many, who were fellow seekers with me, stepped into the pool, and were healed. I wept—I prayed—I struggled—I agonized. It seemed to me that I must feel more pungent grief, have greater sorrow for past coldness, before I could be

“Plung’d in the ocean of his love.”

But when, after many days of trial to *prepare myself* for the blessing, I gave up in despair of success; then it was, that God made my extremity his glorious opportunity. It was at one of my *stated* seasons for secret prayer. Never did I feel as I then felt. All my interests for time and eternity, seemed to hang upon *that* moment. My feelings became every moment more and more intense; the earth receded; the heavens lowered; my faith grew stronger; until, at last, losing sight of self, and grasping with the firm grasp of faith upon the promises of God, I could say—

“Here, Lord, I give myself away,
‘Tis all that I can do.”

That struggle sealed my victory. In a moment, O, how changed! Love flowed into my heart like a river; every feeling and passion seemed changed, and in the sentiment of the poet I could cry—

“For ever here my rest shall be,
Close to thy bleeding side.”

My prayer was turned to praise, and had I been in possession of ten thousand souls, I should have given them all to Jesus, so lovely, so exceedingly beautiful did he appear.

Since then I have passed through various scenes; I have been variously circumstanced and tried; but whenever I have put my trust in the *Lord*, I have ever found him a "present help." Praise God for the *fullness*, the *freeness*, and *preciousness* of the Gospel. I have not had continually the witness of my *full* acceptance, but most of the time I have been able to hold the blessing as I received it, viz. by simple faith in Christ.

It rejoices my heart to hear of so many who have received this priceless pearl; but when, O, *when*, will the *Church* be freed from the very appearance of evil. May God in mercy speed the time! Then will cease all strife and contention. Then, and *not* till then, will the Church be able to exert a holy and salutary influence upon community; and Christianity be wiped of a stain which has long stigmatized and debased her. Brethren, enlist *anew* in the ranks of Christ, and come up to the help of the Lord of hosts, against the mighty.

H. P. ANDREWS.

Woburn.

From the Oberlin Evangelist.

RELIGIOUS APHORISMS.

A sense of profound dependence upon the grace of Christ for the practice of holiness, is always attended, in a truly evangelical mind, with a consciousness of obligation infinitely strong, to render perfect obedience to every command of God, and of the entire practicability of rendering such obedience. The reason is this. While such a mind is fully conscious of absolute impotence in itself, it rests in the joyful assurance, that in Christ, there is grace full and free to keep every command of God, and that to avail itself of that grace, is at all times and in all circumstances perfectly practicable. To an individual under the pervading influence of such a spirit, the following declarations of Christ are present as living and infinitely momentous realities. "Without me ye can do nothing." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Hence he ever acts under a deep impression of the necessity of obedience to the command, "Abide in me," and of the certain truth and fearful import of the declaration, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Here we have disclosed to us the two fatal rocks upon which the Antinomian on the one hand, and the Legalist on the other, split.

The former affirms, not only our absolute impotence in ourselves for any thing good, but our impotence equally absolute to avail ourselves of the grace of Christ for the practice of holiness. Hence such a person lies perfectly powerless under the dominion of sin, quietly expecting to be saved by the grace of Christ *in and not from* sin. The latter, under the conviction of the self evident truth that whatever is required of us we have ability to perform, overlooks the fact that all real ability to do what is pleasing to God, arises from the fact that we are able to avail ourselves of the grace of Christ for the practice of holiness, and that obedience is practicable to us on no other condition. Such an individual therefore vainly attempts the practice of holiness, not through faith in Christ, but by dint of personal effort. Hence the experience of such an individual presents a perpetual illustration of the declaration, "without me, ye can do nothing."

Between these two rocks the evangelical spirit, with the eye of faith resting continually upon Christ for "grace to help in every time of need," passes peacefully onward in implicit obedience to all the commands of God. Brother, have you been fully introduced into this grand secret of holy living? Then has your "righteousness gone forth as brightness, and your salvation as a lamp that burneth."

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE LOVE OF JESUS.

I have thought much of an expression of Rev. C. Fitch, in regard to the *willingness* of the adorable Redeemer to save his people from their sins. He remarked *emphatically*, *Jesus loves to do it!* He *loves* to take us for his own. He *loves* to wash us from every pollution, and make us all glorious within. I was induced to write the following lines from those sweet and touching words, *Jesus loves to do it.*

The blessed Jesus loves to claim
 The purchase of his blood,—
 To take us for his own, and make
 Our hearts his loved abode:—
 To "take away our dross and tin,"
 And "make us glorious all within."

He loves to take the wretched slave
 From Satan's cruel grasp,
 And clothe him in salvation's robe—
 Then to his bosom clasp—
 And call him his beloved one,
 Redeemed and saved by grace alone.

He loves to take the sin stained soul
 From deepest depths of guilt,
 And wash him in the precious blood,
 For his redemption spilt ;
 And then, arrayed in spotless white,
 That blest one to himself unite.

He loves to take the stony heart
 And melt its hardness down,
 Then shape it in the mould divine,
 Of the most Holy One,
 That his own impress it may bear—
 His lovely likeness shining there.

He loves to make his shadowing wings
 Our covert from life's storms,—
 To shield us from the tempter's darts,
 And from earth's luring charms :
 From all the ills that crowd our way,
 While in this vale of tears we stay.

He loves to cheer our drooping souls
 In sorrow's dreary hour ;
 And whisper words of peace and love,
 When clouds of darkness lower,
 And cast around their gloomy shade,
 Or burst in torrents on our head.

He loves to be our "Sun and Shield,"
 Our Comforter and Guide ;
 "And no good thing will he withhold,"
 If we in him confide :
 O, all we want we find in this
 Blest source of light, and life, and bliss !

Mount Holly, N. J.

M.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

LETTER FROM A CORRESPONDENT

FROM CINCINNATI, OHIO.

DEAR BRETHREN,—I send you enclosed, ten dollars, for twelve copies of the *Guide* for this year. I trust the six copies I received last year, will be as seed sown in good ground. When I first subscribed for this work, I knew of none that were earnestly seeking the

blessing of sanctification; but since that time, several have sought and found that God has power to cleanse from all unrighteousness. There are many more who are groaning for full redemption, and I do hope that God will sanctify our church this year.

I joined the church about twelve years since, (unconverted,) on probation. My mother was a widow, and I the eldest of seven children—a ringleader of the wicked boys where I lived. They prophesied that I would not stand long. But I sought the Lord for several months, and while on my way from New Orleans, on a trading voyage, the Lord, for Christ's sake, pardoned my sins. I shall never forget that glorious Christmas Eve, when I returned home, and told my mother and all around, what a dear Saviour I had found. I set up family worship immediately. My mother was not a professor, nor were her other children. They all refused to bow before the Lord.

I continued family worship, and in secret, in the fields and other places, prayed for the conversion of my mother, sisters and brothers till at length they bowed at the altar of mercy. O how this rejoiced me. It pleased God soon after to convert my mother and her other children. One has since died in the triumphs of faith, and has gone home to glory.

I have been a class leader about eight years, and have frequently urged my members to seek a deeper work of grace; and have frequently sought it myself, but not in the right way. Soon after I subscribed for the *Guide*, we established a band or inquiry meeting. The Lord powerfully revived a hungering and thirsting for full redemption in the members who attended. I, being the leader, felt an awful weight of responsibility; they prayed for me, and sometimes I thought I had almost obtained the blessing. It pleased God to sanctify a young minister, through the instrumentality of the *Guide* and our meetings. This encouraged me. At our late camp meeting I was enabled to give my heart entirely to God. O how happy I have been ever since!

O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!

My companion has since received the blessing. What a happy family we are! To-day a brother informed me that the Lord had given him the blessing of perfect love. He is also a class leader, and I hope the Lord will keep him faithful. I feel that I must keep my heart clean, and have it filled with the divine fullness, if I would communicate to others.

My prayer is, that God may make your *Guide to Christian Perfection* a great blessing to the church and the world.

Affectionately,

WM. HART.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER

FROM MRS. WADE, BAPTIST MISSIONARY AT TAVOY, BURMAH.

I have thought much, of late, of the precious promises of the Bible to the Christian, and it seems to me we do not claim them and plead them before the throne of grace, as it is our privilege and duty to do. Is not Christ to us our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification, as well as redemption? And are we not to believe Christ will give us the victory over sin? The apostles wrote as though it was common for Christians to abide in Christ, be led by the Spirit, and have Christ dwelling by faith in their hearts. Do Christians generally understand the nature of their blessings? And more than all, do they enjoy them? Do we feel weaned from this vain world? Have we submitted our will entirely to the will of God, so that Christ now lives and reigns by faith in our hearts? I have read nothing scarcely of late but my Bible, and it seems to me that this is the common blessing of the gospel covenant—freedom from all sin. And it seems to me that the great difficulty is, we have not exercised faith in Christ to convert and save us, but set about trying to save and deliver ourselves, instead of exercising faith in Christ to sanctify our hearts, just as we did exercise that faith for our conversion. Are we not just as unable to subdue sin in our hearts as we were to convert our hearts at first? And must not both the blessings be obtained through faith?

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

Andover, Mass., December 1, 1840.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The following is an extract from a letter lately received from a brother in Wilkinson Co., Mississippi. It was not written for publication, but I have taken the liberty to forward it to you in its epistolary form, believing so clear an experience cannot fail to encourage others to seek the same blessing. The camp meeting to which allusion is made, was owned of God in the conversion of between thirty and forty souls, and is graciously refreshing the Church.

Z. A. MUDGE.

During the past year my mind has been much and frequently engaged for the entire sanctification of my soul to God, a work which I believe I once enjoyed, but which, through want of watchfulness, I lost. Since that time, although I have had many seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, I could not rest until I had regained that state of entire devotedness to the will of God I once enjoyed.

Sunday afternoon, during the camp meeting, we had a sacramental meeting;—address from Br. Clinton, chiefly on sanctification. I was much blessed in taking the memorials of the body and blood of

Christ, and appeared on the verge of obtaining the desire of my heart—even the sanctification of my soul, spirit and body, by the blood of Christ. But O! how weak and unstable I am. Being called off before the sermon closed, to see a patient, apparently on the verge of the eternal world, I grieved the Spirit by neglecting to speak to him on religion. I felt condemned, and my soul was filled with darkness; and although I endeavored to humble myself, and again apply to the blood of atonement, I returned to the camp ground about midnight, discouraged and cast down, in the faint hope of finding a meeting in which to seek refuge. They were still engaged in prayer for mourners in Br. L.'s tent, and in speaking to them concerning my exercises of mind, I was somewhat comforted. During this meeting, Br. F., and sister H., and myself, covenanted together that we would seek the work of sanctification, until we obtained it. But O! I feel that words cannot adequately delineate the events of that night—a night I believe I shall remember through the ages of eternity. After singing and prayer, Br. F. became engaged, and in a short time nearly all simultaneously appeared to be engaged, either for the conversion or sanctification of their souls. There was but little *vocal* prayer, but each seemed engaged for himself—each mourned and struggled apart, and wrestled with God in earnest, agonizing prayer. Presently the power of God descended, and Br. F. was enabled to rejoice in God for a present, full and free salvation, and commenced praising God, and exhorting others. Soon after Br. S. joined him in praising God for the same blessing. My own mind during this time was earnestly engaged, but hardness seemed to pervade my heart, and darkness my mind. Unbelief seemed to prevail; the more I prayed, the harder my heart and darker my mind seemed to become. My late unfaithfulness pressed me heavily with a sense of guilt and unworthiness; my body was exhausted, and often was I tempted to give over the struggle; but blessed be God, I persevered until I was brought to this point,—*I must believe, yea, I will believe*, and make an entire surrender of myself.—Here, Lord, take me as I am, and make me what thou wouldst have me be. Light broke in upon my mind; love, joy and peace filled my soul. I broke out in strains of praise and adoration to my Redeemer. Never did I have such views of the unbounded fullness and freeness of redeeming grace. It appeared an ocean without a bottom or shore, to which all might come and receive pardon, peace and purity. Every evil desire, every unholy passion was removed, and my whole soul was filled with love—love to God, and love to man. I was willing to be any thing or nothing for God—to do his holy will, whatever sacrifice that might require. Love of the world, love of reputation, anxiety about worldly matters and future life, were all removed, and God and his will was all, and in all. During the night several others were enabled to testify of converting, restoring and sanctifying grace.

GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

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For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS

HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

LXVIII.

It will help us to ascertain whether we are truly humble, if we inquire whether we are free from the opposites of humility. The opposites of a humble state of mind, (or at least those things which sustain a divergent and antagonist relation,) are impatience, uneasiness, a feeling that something and perhaps much depends on ourselves, undue sensitiveness to the praise and the reproofs of men, and sensoriousness. No man should account himself truly humbled, who is the subject of these unhappy states of mind.

LXIX.

It is a great practical principle in the religious life, that *a state of suffering furnishes the test of love*. When God is pleased to bestow his favors upon us, when his blessings are repeated every hour, how can we tell whether we love him for what he *is*, or for what he *gives*? But, when in seasons of deep and varied afflictions, our heart still clings to him as our only hope and only joy, we may well say, "Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee."

LXX.

In believing in the possibility of present sanctification, and in combining with this belief the determination to attain to it, we realize in ourselves the possession of that shield of faith mentioned in the Scriptures, by means of which we are enabled to quench the fiery darts of the adversary. On the contrary, in rejecting this belief, and in acting in accordance with this rejection, we throw away our shield; and it is no more than reasonable to expect that we shall be pierced through and through with the enemy's weapons.

LXXI.

As a general thing, it may be expected that all Christians will find themselves able to bear the GREAT CROSSES of life, because they come with observation; they attract notice by their very magnitude; and, by putting the soul on its guard, give it strength to meet them. But happy, thrice happy is he, who can bear the LITTLE

crosses, which ever lie in wait, and which attack us secretly and without giving warning, like a thief in the night.

LXXII.

We are told in the Scriptures that all things are the Christian's. Heaven, Christ, God, things present and things to come, *all* are his. But the possession in the present life is of a two-fold nature—sometimes by present enjoyment and sometimes by *faith*. More commonly, and undoubtedly for wise reasons, the possession is by faith. But in the view of Him, whose life is hid with Christ, the possession is not on that account any the less sure.

LXXIII.

In endeavoring to estimate the genuineness of our religious experiences, we should ever keep in mind that all those experiences, which are wrought by the Spirit of God, and are genuine in their character, tend decidedly and uniformly to personal *humility*. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." How can it be otherwise? The tendency of all true religion is to make God every thing, and ourselves comparatively nothing; to sink the creature while it elevates and enthrones the Creator in the centre of the heart. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

LXXIV.

The height and sum of religion is to bear the image of Christ. But can those flatter themselves that they bear the Saviour's image, who are overcome and are rendered impatient by every trifling incident of an adverse nature? O, remember that the life of Christ was from beginning to end a life of trouble. He was often misunderstood and illtreated by all classes; he was persecuted by the Pharisees; sold by the traitor whom he had chosen as one of his disciples; reviled by the thief on the cross; put to death. But he was far more desirous of the salvation and good of his enemies, than he was of personal exemption from their persecutions. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

LXXV.

There are various views of Christian perfection, which, on being analyzed, amount to the same thing; and when properly understood, may be regarded as all equally correct. The author of the *Imitation of Christ*, says it consists in man's offering up himself "with his whole heart to the will of God; never seeking his own will either in small or great respects, either in time or eternity; but with an equal mind weighing all things in the balance of the sanctuary; and receiving both prosperity and adversity with continual thanksgiving."

LXXVI.

Men bestow honor one upon another. Sometimes they build up, sometimes they pull down. But human opinions cannot alter the reality of things, by making it greater or less than it is. Every man is truly such and such only, AS HE IS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

LXXVII.

Some persons seem to be able to trust God in every thing, excepting in one particular, viz: *they feel that they must do their own fighting*. But what is the language of Scripture? "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." It is said of Christ himself, Matt. xii. 19, HE SHALL NOT STRIVE.

T. C. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

LETTER

FROM A BAPTIST LADY TO HER FRIEND.

MY DEAR SISTER,—A long time has elapsed since I promised to give you a brief history of my experience. Unforeseen circumstances have prevented my doing it before.

I was educated a Unitarian. From early childhood I was the subject of many serious impressions, but did not receive that kind of instruction which my young, tender, and inquiring mind needed. Often did I think, "O that I knew where I could find one who could tell me what I must do to be saved." When I was about 12 years of age, I went to see the minister, in hopes that he would talk with me about my soul. Here I was disappointed: I had not confidence enough to tell him how I felt, or that I wanted to be a Christian. After this, I felt that I must go to the Bible for instruction. I made it my companion. There I was taught that I must be born again; that to be a Christian, was to be made a new creature in Christ: but how this great change could be effected, was a mystery to me. I greatly needed some one to guide my inquiring mind. At the age of 16, I was permitted, in the providence of God, to hear evangelical preaching, by walking two miles. The second sermon I heard was from John iii. 3: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The Holy Spirit applied the truth with power. All my sins were arrayed before me. At one glance I saw my whole past life. I then felt that I was a poor, miserable, wretched, undone sinner, exposed to the burning wrath of God; but in Christ I saw the remedy, and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, I was enabled to cast myself on him. Here my weary, sin-oppressed, tempest-tost soul found rest and peace. What sweet peace flows into the believer's soul! There is peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Most of the Christians with whom I then associated, were advanced in life and experience. I shall never forget the feelings I had, when I attended the prayer meetings, to hear Christians begin their prayers by telling God what great sinners they were; that they sinned in every thing they did; that their most holy duties were sin. It appeared to me that this was the way that a sin-convinced, guilty, condemned, and penitent sinner approached God. I understood by the term Christian, one who had been created anew, washed, cleansed, and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; delivered from the power and dominion of the prince of darkness; translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son; reconciled to God by the blood of the cross. The 6th chapter of Romans

most beautifully presented to my mind the state of the new-born soul. On this, the 8th of Romans, and numerous other similar passages, I based my views. At one of the prayer meetings I expressed my feelings. The wife of one of the deacons replied, "You have not lost your first love. You will not always feel so." This was the first time that I ever heard of losing "first love." I did not know what to make of it. For a short time it made me feel sad: at length I overcame the trial. Though at times I was grieved and tried, yet I think that I enjoyed that love which casteth out all fear—could rejoice in a present Saviour. After the lapse of one year, a circumstance occurred which led me to the conclusion, "what every one says must be true." I heard it from the desk; from experienced Christians; I found it in all the memoirs and religious books which I had read, that the body of sin is not entirely destroyed in the heart of the Christian till death; that inbred sin, the remains of corruption, constitute the Christian's warfare: when these are destroyed, the warfare will cease, and that will be at death. Here I stopped to reason with blind unbelief, and I experienced the bitter consequences. O that I had kept my former independence of mind, and gone to the Bible with my eye fixed on Christ, till I was established. Often did I wish that I could feel as I did the first year after my conversion. I wept, I prayed, I fasted; in short, I went the whole round of religious duties, but could not get back to that state. I was not in darkness. I had no doubt in regard to the work of grace in my soul, or of my acceptance with God; but I had dishonored him by unbelief, and this prevented me from enjoying the *clear rays of the Sun of righteousness*. My peace, light, and joy seemed inconstant. This state of things continued till I was led to look at the doctrine of holiness, or sanctification. I will here remark, that it was opposition to the doctrine that led me to resolve to examine the Bible in reference to the subject; and I most heartily rejoice that I was thus led. At the commencement, I felt the need of the influence of that Spirit which the Saviour promised to his disciples, "*the Spirit of truth, to guide into all truth.*" I asked for it. Light divine beamed on the sacred page. My mind became deeply interested. I improved all my leisure moments in examining the Bible. I laid aside all other reading, and dispensed with all the engagements I could consistently. This was the all-absorbing theme. Many times I went without my meals rather than have my mind diverted. I soon became convinced that "sanctification," "Christian perfection," "perfect love," was nothing more or less than that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." When I was convinced of this, I was prepared to seek it with all my heart. In connection with the Bible, I read Wesley's Plain Account, Hester Ann Rogers, The Christian Manual, and President Mahan's Address before the Society of Inquiry, at Oberlin.

All these threw light upon the subject. Their views appeared to me scriptural. What they attained and enjoyed I believed was my privilege, and also of every Christian. I felt that I could not rest without this great blessing. I was led to look at the whole extent of the Christian character,—its height and depth, length and breadth,—and to inquire what I had to give up; if I had any idols to dethrone. I felt willing to relinquish every forbidden object, and let Jesus have full possession. In this state of mind I went to see President Mahan, who was then in Boston. I communicated to him my feelings. He replied, “You need *more faith*. *Believe*, and the *blessing* is *yours*.” He then inquired, “What are your besetting sins? Make them a specific subject of prayer. Come to Christ for grace to conquer.” He related his own experience, and prayed with me. I was much encouraged and strengthened by this interview, though I did not feel any change in my mind. The next morning I awoke burdened with sin. I deeply realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and especially unbelief. I never had such a view of this sin before. I believed that it was this that shut the Saviour out of my heart. I resolved to come to Christ just as I was,—guilty, polluted, sin-defiled,—and plead the efficacy of that blood which cleanseth from *all sin*. I tried to make a free, unconditional, and unreserved surrender of myself to the Lord, to be wholly and entirely his; henceforth, to consider myself the purchased property of the Lord Jesus Christ, ever to feel that I am at his disposal. After I had made this solemn surrender, I felt that I must wait, that I could not go away without the blessing. Soon the Saviour appeared as my Saviour. I felt that in him I possessed all things. A sweet, holy, and heavenly peace pervaded my soul. There was nothing of ecstasy, all was calm and peaceful. Since that ever memorable morning, (Feb. 15, 1839,) my peace has been like a river, flowing on to the ocean of eternal love. *Christ dwells* in my heart by *faith*. This seems to be the sweetest expression that I can use. My interest in the precious cause of Christ has increased. I have never sought for joy and happiness. It has appeared to me of infinite importance to possess the *spirit* of *Christ*, his tenderness of spirit, his sympathy, his compassion for a sinking world. I formerly had prejudice, and was prone, at times, to indulge it. I feel now that I am emancipated from it. If one thing more than another has weighed upon my spirits, it is the sad state of our churches. The opposition and prejudice against the doctrine of holiness, has indeed been painful, but I am permitted to rejoice in the dawn of a brighter day. A redeeming spirit is abroad. Some noble champions of the truth have been raised up. May there be, very soon, a great company, to publish this precious doctrine,—the glory of the gospel,—full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. I have filled my sheet, but have not said all I would.

M. W.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXPERIENCE.

DEAR BROTHER MERRITT,—I have perused a few numbers of the *Guide*, by which I have been both edified and blessed. I saw a number some time since, and read upon the cover, "We are in special want of matter for the *Guide*." I felt impressed to contribute, for the promotion of holiness, my own experience. A suggestion arose, it would do no good in such a glorious cause; consequently I concluded to be silent. But after more mature deliberation and prayer, I felt conscious God had done much for me, and if it were possible, I ought to promote his cause by confessing "the blood of Christ had cleansed me from all sin." I turned to my diary, from which I make the following extracts:—

January, 1836.—During this revival, quite a large number were converted. My own soul was often like "a well watered garden." I longed to be spent in the vineyard of the Lord. But O, the longings of soul I felt for perfect purity. Sometimes, when praying for mourners at the altar of prayer, my heart would be drawn away from their condition to pray for holiness for myself in such a manner, it seemed I could pray for nothing else; and though often blessed, it did not satisfy me. I saw such a fullness in Christ, such a beauty in the holiness and purity of God, I could not be satisfied unless filled with all his fullness. I had been convinced, by reading the Bible and pious memoirs, it was my privilege to enjoy it. The unsatisfied desires of my soul urged me to seek it. O, what hungering and thirsting I felt for the living God. I panted after him as the heart panteth for the cooling water brooks. And often did the inquiry arise in my mind, "After thy lovely likeness, Lord, ah! when shall I wake up?" The least trifling word afflicted my conscience, which was as tender as the apple of an eye. Vain and idle thoughts were unwelcome guests. An unholy dream gave me pain. I wanted my whole life conformed to the holy example of my Saviour. I wanted "to walk even as he walked." I was grieved to see professing Christians jesting or trifling. I could not bear a fretful, peevish spirit; and the words of our excellent hymn book—

"What, never speak one evil word,
Or rash, or idle, or unkind?
O how shall I, most gracious Lord,
This mark of true perfection find?"—

were often applied to my mind. I wanted to hear and talk of nothing but holiness. It even mingled with my sleeping hours, during the silent watches of the night. I prayed hours for it. I read every

thing I found on the subject ; and the sermon that did not directly or indirectly touch upon it, appeared to me like a skeleton. But when I heard it preached upon, my soul was all desire. A pious friend gave me the following rules of holy living :

1. Let your words be few and serious.
2. Let your temper be mild, and all your actions kind.
3. Let your deportment exhibit cheerfulness, modesty, and devotion.
4. Begin every day with prayer ; spend it watchfully and dutifully, and end it with praise to God.

I endeavored to regulate my life by these, and to keep God's glory constantly in view ; and in all I did to have in reference the day of final judgment. Devoted souls were my delight. How irksome was the society of any but those who either enjoyed or were pressing after entire purity of heart. I even dreaded a visit from a near friend, as it diverted my mind from communion with God and the pursuit of his renewing grace. I prayed without ceasing for days together : whether eating, drinking, walking or conversing, my heart was engaged in mental prayer for entire sanctification. This was last in my mind at lying down at night, and first in rising up in the morning. I often fasted for it, and in this I found sensible benefit. I watched over my words and my thoughts ; believing, with the psalmist, if I "ordered my conversation aright, I should see the salvation of God." Sometimes, in a retired apartment, I walked the room, lifting up my heart in silent prayer to the Lord for his cleansing grace. This would sharpen my devotions and increase my desires, and give a more wakeful appetite to prayer. I longed to have pride and unbelief rooted out of my heart. I wanted that faith which credits all the word of God. I desired to have a freer access to a throne of heavenly grace at all times. In my approaches to God, I felt at times a spirit of fretfulness and impatience ; and often did I cry,

"Lay the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And open in my heart a little heaven."

The conviction for this blessing far exceeded that for justification, though I felt no guilt or condemnation. * * * * * My sympathetic powers were acute ; a tender spirit of weeping often melted my soul in prayer. I profited much by reading the Lives of Bramwell and Benjamin Abbot. Merritt's Address, in pamphlet form, on Christian Perfection, was made a great blessing to me, especially that part treating upon the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. The Acts of the Apostles I often read over and over again. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, so often spoken of therein, I ardently desired to feel. I thirsted for it as one famishing by thirst in a desert land. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Ask and receive, that your joy

may be full," more than a hundred times were applied to my mind, often drawing tears from my eyes. I sometimes felt so much in family prayer, I trembled like a leaf in the wind. I retired one evening for secret prayer. I felt the Spirit's influence in such a degree as to produce a weakness throughout my frame. I had hardly opened my mouth in prayer, when it seemed as if the heavens were coming down to earth. An awful sense of the presence of God rested upon me. It appeared the powers of darkness surrounded me to prevent my obtaining the blessing. I drew back with fear. The temptation, "put it off until family prayers," was suggested to my mind. I listened to it for a moment, but the presence of God as then manifested, was withdrawn. I almost despaired of obtaining, as the nearer I approached the blessing, the more powerful and cruel were my temptations from Satan. I thought, as I preached, how could I teach others what I did not know myself. I could be of little use in the world, or church, without this blessing, and the thought of being but a weak, dwarfish Christian all my days, and thereby deprive my soul of what had been so dearly bought by my Saviour's precious blood, and probably miss of heaven at last, only prevented my giving up the struggle. Again did I resolve to go up and possess the Canaan of perfect love. I waged an irreconcilable war once more with my internal foes. And although I had been defeated, I resolved once more to approach, in the name of Christ, the citadel of my enemies within. One morning, in company with a circuit preacher at Br. B.'s, during a season of social prayer, I felt again an unusual struggle for the blessing. The power of God rested on all present. It threw my soul into an agony, and even "my flesh cried out for the living God." I fell to the floor in deep distress. The blessing approached almost within reach, and as I looked to Christ by faith, it seemed to approach still nearer. Temptations, like chilling water, were poured upon my spirits, to dampen my ardor, and divert my mind. My soul appeared all desire, and the language thereof,

"My heart strings groan with deep complaint;
My flesh lies panting, Lord, for thee;
And every limb, and every joint,
Stretches for perfect purity."

But Satan tried to keep me from it; his temptations were as cruel almost as death itself. I groaned and cried to the Lord for victory. O, how I felt the need of some one to pray for me, far more than when seeking pardon. The circuit preacher had fallen under the Spirit's power, and lay motionless on the floor, and some had risen from their knees. I was tempted to think they thought I had been a hypocrite, and had never been converted, and was then crying for mercy under conviction for my actual sins. I yielded to the tempta-

tion for a moment: my ardent desires left me; the presence of God was again withdrawn. I arose disheartened and unhappy; I felt as one who had been fighting for a prize and had lost the conquest. Next day being Sabbath, I attended meeting. And whilst leading the class, the sacred purifying fire went through my soul, burning up my pride and unbelief. I ventured all on Christ. Glory to his eternal name. I was filled with unspeakable joy. O, what faith and confidence I felt in God. Salvation in heavenly floods was poured upon my soul. It appeared to be a fire of burning love throughout my whole soul. After this, when I went to my private devotions, ere I had opened my mouth in prayer, the Lord has poured his blessings upon my soul. And often was I so sweetly and fully blessed, that I desired to break away from the clay tenement, that I might inhale the pure air of heaven, and gaze upon my adored Redeemer and see him face to face without an intervening veil, and be lost and swallowed up in the ocean of love divine. I now felt the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost resided within my unworthy heart; and at times it has seemed I had distinct communion with all three. The Father has appeared to me to be like an unbounded ocean of purity and majesty, which always filled me with solemn awe and veneration. And sometimes I have viewed the Son by faith, in person, so near me, and so much like a reality, it seemed I could clasp him in my arms, and pray to him, as I would converse with a friend, face to face. O! how have his sufferings and wounds endeared him to me! And in my approaches to the Father for his blessings, the name of Jesus only repeated, was the most successful petition I could use. And Jesus has always appeared to me the most precious appellation by which he is called.

At other times, I felt no particular communion with either the Father or Son, but with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes I have felt the outpourings of the Spirit almost as sensibly as I could water. At other times, it appears more like a pure flame, burning on my heart; but generally, like the gentle fountain, springing up into everlasting life: and so exquisite has been my enjoyment at times, I felt I was a wonder to myself. O! to hold communion with the triune God, who upholds universal nature, has appeared to exhibit such condescension on his part, as would sink me in adoring silence at his feet, and involuntarily I would utter from my lips:

"O! for this love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues,
The Saviour's praises speak."

I could not now be silent in the company of the unconverted without warning them of their danger, and pointing them to Christ. O! how plain was my duty. The Spirit would roll upon me a bur-

den for undying souls in the way to ruin so that, at times, I could not converse with them without weeping; and if I neglected to speak to them, I grieved the Spirit, and lost my light and enjoyment."

But to proceed. I lost the witness of the blessing, by giving way to the idea, if I had not those raptures constantly, I had not perfect love. If I was tempted or weighed down, I concluded a sanctified person did not feel as I felt, and consequently dared not profess the blessing; but after struggling and praying for it, again it would be given me. And then, O! how happy! The very spirit which glowed within my heart would seem almost audibly to say, "surely, this is perfect love." And thus, for some time, I kept gaining and losing the blessing, until I have become less ignorant of Satan's devices. And now, let my frames of mind or feelings be what they may, I live by faith, and often are my severest trials and temptations precursors to greater blessings. I now, in all suitable places, confess what God has done for me, through the merits of his Son.

I preach holiness; and I have seen, when preaching on this subject, men fall under the power of God like men slain in battle; and in praying with those who were seeking purity of heart, I have seen them sink down in a motionless, deathlike state, being

"Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in His immensity."

Nothing so enraptures my soul as preaching, praying, and talking about holiness. O, blessed subject! It is the *marrow* of the Bible — the *essence* of the gospel — the *bone* and *sinew* of Christ's church! I almost envy the Editor his task and usefulness. O may he spread sheets innumerable, until the world becomes Emanuel's land, and a mountain of holiness to the Lord.

A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

TO REV. T. MERRITT,—Rev. and Dear Father in Christ: I had not forgotten your request, but for several reasons, which I think you would deem justifiable, was delaying the fulfilment of it, when by your repeated solicitation in Sister Palmer's letter, (which I received last evening,) I was prompted to the immediate performance of the duty which now devolves upon me. And probably I could not select as the subject of my letter, a more profitable or pleasing topic than the exercises of my mind for the last twenty-four hours. Last evening I attended the class of which I am a member; I went there with

my soul unspeakably happy in God ; and in relating my experience, I remarked, that I had of late been striving with unusual earnestness to keep my eyes *steadfastly fixed upon Jesus*, and while he had been in my view, I had lost sight of *earthly* objects, and my soul had been wholly absorbed by his love. My excellent leader remarked, in reply, "It is by looking to Jesus," or "*looking at Jesus*, that we are *changed into his image*." It struck my mind with peculiar force, and produced such a thrill of holy joy as I cannot describe. *I was then looking at Jesus*. He seemed standing before me, arrayed in glory and beauty that surpassed all I had even before conceived of, and looking upon me with a look of tender regard, benignant love and divine complacency, seemed to *claim me for his own*. My soul was so captivated with the charms of the adorable Redeemer, that when my leader spoke of being *changed into his image*, I felt such a transport of bliss, as nearly overpowered me. Oh ! thought I, to be assimilated to *His glorious likeness* — to be a partaker of *His nature* — to be "one with Him !" What ineffable felicity — what overwhelming glory — what amazing exaltation ! for an abject worm of earth, to be changed into the image of Jesus ! And this is *my privilege* ! I, who am "less than the least of all saints." I, who am the most unworthy of so distinguished a favor, thus honored, thus blessed of God ! Heretofore my heart has borne but the mere outlines of that glorious image ; but now, I am to receive the *full impress* ! Yes, *now*, while I am *looking at Jesus* ! *now*, he is moulding me and fashioning me after his own lovely likeness ! My soul is in his hands, *passive* as clay in the hands of the potter. Jesus is making me all glorious within ! I shall be *like him* ! I have fixed my eyes upon him, never more to remove them thence, and it is by *looking* at him that I am to be conformed to his likeness ! O ! such a fullness of love and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. I seemed, indeed, "filled unutterably full of glory and of God." As I came home, Jesus seemed *walking* with me, and communing with my heart by the way. When I retired to my chamber, his presence accompanied me, and his glory appeared to fill the room ! For several hours, I could not sleep. My heart was in such raptures of joy, that I could not become sufficiently composed to sleep. At length, exhausted nature sank into repose ; but still my mind was occupied with the same glorious object. Often I would awake in ecstasies, exclaiming "Jesus ! O, thou art my Saviour — my Redeemer from all sin — my happiness — my heaven !" I have ever since, enjoyed the same delightful consciousness of his presence, who is the life of all my joys, and am still enabled to keep my eyes unwaveringly fixed upon him. I see clearly that this is the way, and the *only way* to *abide* in his love, and to have the *continual victory* over the world, the flesh, and Satan, viz : to keep *looking at Jesus*. While our eyes are fixed upon him, we shall not see the *smiles* or *frowns*

of our fellow beings; we shall not see the attractions of earth's gilded pleasures — its riches and honors, nor the dark clouds of adversity impending over our heads; we shall see nothing to dismay or to elate us, and therefore we shall escape the many snares which Satan has set for our feet, and into some of which we are *sure* to fall, if for *one moment* we cease "*looking to Jesus.*" And it seems to me, I can never again desire to look at aught beside. O! how paltry, how empty, how vain, do all other objects appear to us, when our souls are captivated with the charms of our beloved! How *insipid*, how *tasteless*, do the pleasures of the world seem, after having drank at the *fountain of pure, celestial love!* The thought of even, for *one moment*, turning to earth again — leaving the fountain head of bliss, and stooping to creature happiness, seems to me more dreadful than to endure the most agonizing sufferings; and death itself would be *infinitely preferable*. If I was as sure of heaven as that I now exist, it would not satisfy me, nor could I be happy in any degree, if I thought that I should ever, for a *short time*, *depart from God* and bring reproach upon his blessed name, who has "*loved me, and given himself for me.*" Pray for me, dear Father Merritt, that I may be "*steadfast, immovable*, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

With Christian regard, believe me yours,
Mount Holly, Nov. 25th, 1840.

M. D. I.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

WHAT WAS HIS MANNER?

This is a question which is frequently proposed by those who would be *Christ-like*. The heart, panting for full conformity to the divine image, cannot be unmindful of the action and reaction of mind and manner. I have watched the "*consecrated one,*" who has taken for a motto, "*holy carefulness,*" and while I have marked the careful gesture, listened to the gentle voice, and heard language of sacred cultivation, I have felt an appeal to my heart which no direct or vocal address could ~~make~~. It is true, we all know that the external is nothing, however correct and lovely it may be, unless the *heart* be in it; unless the heart be correct, right, and lovely. But who, that has determined to improve to the utmost all that the allwise Creator has bestowed upon him, natural as well as spiritual, has not felt, and does not constantly feel, that he has before him, and now in his hands, the united work of holding the heart up to Christ Jesus, by strong and unwavering faith; and also of having his words few and fitly spoken; his voice not boisterous and unsubdued; his counte-

nance never distorted ; and his laughter never wild. The conversant with Jesus well knows that he dictates to this ; all the meekness and gentleness of the Saviour are before the mind. But he knows too, full well, that even good feelings do not always get as good expression : that even Christians, *deeply* devoted ones, are exposed, by the power of sympathy or the strength of former habits, to using "by-word" terms and vehement expressions ; such as do not conduce to lead the spirit of man to nearer access, and closer affinity with the hallowed Spirit of his God. My heart has sometimes saddened while I have heard those of holy profession speak without seeming to remember that Jesus spake no idle words ; and move with that rashness of gesture, using the voice in that careless manner, which seemed to contradict the profession that the lovely Saviour was living within : yet I could not doubt that the heart was sincere in its movements.

I know that it is said, "Keep thy *heart* with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life ;" but this cannot imply that nothing further is to be attended to. To cultivate gentle, simple, and hallowed manners, may be a most efficient means of keeping the heart : for who finds himself unmoved or uninfluenced, for the better or worse, by the manners of those with whom he associates ? How much more, then, shall his own habits move upon his own mind ; either leading to, and greatly assisting in, the cultivation of a Lamb-like, holy spirit ; or exposing to, and inviting the attack of Satan. Were we to imagine that the strong connection between feelings and expression would be a faithful and trust worthy regulator of the manner, with it we must imagine ourselves no longer "mere *wrecks* of mind," and occupying tenements which expose us to great embarrassment and irregularities, but having on our immortal bodies ; set free from all that is liable to degeneration. This we cannot do ; being so minded as we are, that we have not yet lain aside these bodies of disease, weakness, and deformity. Harmony doth not now reign throughout the creature, as at that time when the Lord God breathed into him the breath of life. We must *take care* to have our words careful and deliberate, though thought come rushing upon us like a torrent. We must give moderate expression to emotion, though the excitement of the mind rise high. We must move with gentleness and courtesy, though physical languor prevail, and the nerves bespeak their own confusion. And this should we do, not merely because our own minds reply to our manners, but because every word, look, and action of those who profess to be holy, is noticed, is marked, *is felt* by beholders.

While remembering the fall of man, his exposures to improprieties, arising from the deadly atmosphere and diseased organs by which he lives and acts, I turn my eye to Him who took a human body and dwelt among us ; finding in his life and manners a fit and safe example for

A STUDENT.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PERFECT CHRISTIAN.

But to answer the question directly. What is it to be a *perfect Christian*? Two things are necessary, viz., a *clean heart*, and a *heart filled with love to God and man*. This we have already briefly noticed. But is it possible for the heart to be made clean, or to be freed from all sin? We answer affirmatively. That the soul may be saved from the least and last remains of moral pollution and defilement, we have not a shadow of a doubt. Indeed no truth is more clearly revealed in the Bible. Who can read the Bible, anxiously desiring to know the truth, and not acknowledge it? A few passages of scripture on this point will suffice.

"He shall redeem Israel from all his sins." (Ps. cxxx. 8.) "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses." (Ezek. xxxvi. 25—29.) "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Deut. xxx. 6.) The prayer of David is equally in point: "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Numerous passages in the New Testament are equally conclusive. "Deliver us from evil." "Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) "Be holy; for I am holy." (1 Pet. i. 16.) "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 23.) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.) "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John. i. 7.) "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John. iii. 8.) Sin is the work of the devil. Therefore he was manifested to destroy sin.

We are taught directly and unequivocally, in the above passages, the duty and privilege of all Christians. They may be saved from all "filthiness of the flesh and spirit." They may be washed with "pure water." They may be made "pure in heart." Who, with the above passages before them, can doubt this truth?

Eastford, Conn.

R. W. A.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart."

It is not an intellectual service merely that touches the heart of Almighty Love, and brings the blessing into the soul; it is the flowing out of the warm desires of the heart, the homage of love, that meets with a response in the bosom of our God. O Thou who art love, and who answerest the desire of love, answer now my desire, and enstamp thine image on my inmost soul. Let the under current of my soul be love; let every emotion of my heart be love; let every external act be an act of love. Thou knowest that in this desire centres every other emotion of my soul. My love to thee is a great deep that swallows up every other feeling. O, it is blessed to have the under current of the soul a fountain of love, gushing up bright and beautiful as the pure river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Happy is he who returns to the Infinite One the homage of pure, undissembled love; he knows what it is to receive the desires of his heart. He breathes such desires only, as a God of purity and love delights to answer. O, my soul, what a privilege is thine, to delight thyself in God, in holiness, and to receive the desires of thy heart, and dwell in love, and dwell in God.

"Fight manfully the good fight of faith."

The good soldier of Jesus Christ is he who stands firm in the day of battle; who meets the enemy and sustains the fight. The time of onset is the time of reaping laurels; and courage then is courage indeed; victory then *is* victory. What proof could we give of our loyalty to Jesus, if we had no warfare to wage against his enemies? No trials to encounter, nothing to suffer for his sake? Every trial may be a laurel gained, a gem in our crown of rejoicing. Let the Christian soldier, then, rather rejoice in the occasions of severe conflict, since by them he may show the strength of his attachment to Jesus. Why should the Christian ever despond, since he goes out to battle, not in his own strength, but in the name of the Lord of hosts? Thus he may slay every enemy. Through Jesus we are more than conquerors. Let the shield of faith be always bright and burnished, and ready for use; yea, rather let it be kept bright by constant use, and we are safe, for Omnipotence is our defence. The aid of Jesus is secure to us while faith is in exercise.

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

Christian disciple, hast thou separated thyself from the world, and said with an emphasis that none can mistake, yea by thy example, I am the Lord's; and art thou thus a mark to shoot at, an object of reproach? Ye do not suffer for Christ unnoticed and unrewarded. Lift up thy head, and see the gentle influence of the spirit of love, yea of forgiving love, descending and resting upon thee. Look within thy heart and see the operations of that spirit, breathing, "Father, forgive them." For Christ's sake, what canst thou not bear, what canst thou not suffer, that he may be glorified, that the power of his grace may be made manifest. Thou wilt find the greater the cross, the suffering for Christ, the greater will be the glory. There is a glory encircling the cross, which he only sees who bears the cross. The world may see no beauty in the cross of Christ, in submitting to contempt and shame for Christ's sake; but to the follower of Jesus, the cross presents illuminations more splendid, more glorious, than the sun when he goeth forth in his brightness. A glory beams from it, which penetrates the soul, and absorbs it in glory and in God. Let the disciple of Jesus rejoice that the cross awaits him, for all his ascents are by the way of the cross: it is the cross that will bear him onward and upward from glory to glory.

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith."

Faith gives reality, gives life and power to the omnipresence of Jesus. It realizes God, *a God at hand*. So near that it has only to look within and finds him there. Yes, in the heart Jesus may be found. Say, Christian, hast thou found the risen Jesus, the living Jesus, within thee? If not, then darkness still broods over the face of the deep. Seek Jesus, not 'a far off, *seek Jesus within thee*. Then the darkness will be changed to light. It will be day light with thy soul. O, this cruel unbelief! It freezes up the very vitals of the soul; it knows neither the meltings of godly sorrow, nor the joys of forgiveness, nor the bliss of inward holiness. It bars out from the soul its only Friend and Helper. It is the prison of the soul,—who, who will burst his chains, and lay hold on a present Jesus, a bosom Friend, an Almighty Helper?

"Thy word is truth."

He who said, "Let there be light, and there was light;" who separated the light from the darkness, causing each to visit alternately the earth; who, for the space of nearly six thousand years, has rolled the earth and stars along in harmony and beauty, speaks now to me in the volume of truth. And what he has said, he has said. It is

truth immutable, unchangeable as the laws which govern creation. An eternal principle of rectitude sat upon the throne of his heart, and the word comes forth, eternal truth. Nor angels, nor men, nor devils can make it more or less.

"Thy word is truth." I read, and I believe. My soul is witness of the truth; of the truth of what I am; of what I must be; and of what I may be. The heavens may be no more; the sun may cease to shine, and the stars go out in darkness, but thy word stands secure and fixed, eternal truth. Years upon years may come and go, ages upon ages roll on a ceaseless round, and thy word stands eternal truth, eternal as thy own existence. Read by millions that have ceased to be on earth, and to be read by millions yet to come. And now it meets my eye: it comes to me, a sojourner here, as were my fathers; but soon like them I shall pass away. It speaks to me. I read, and I believe. I realize *thy word is truth*. Away from human speculations, from the folly of boasting human reasonings, I turn my eye. Too long have I built my faith on man's opinions. Now, O truth, O word of God, I come to thee. Naked I hang on thy word, and I prove thy word is truth. Thy promises, what are they? They are spirit, and they are life. My soul is unsupplied no more. Doubts and fears, where are ye? Ah, ye are consumed in the light of truth. Ye cannot bear the blaze of truth, when naked faith hangs simply on the word. And malice, and hatred, and revenge, where are ye? By the power of truth, I see you withered, blasted, overthrown. And *self*, the demon *self*, where art thou? Surely crest fallen. Truth wages with thee a war of utter extermination. Its language is, *I am Jehovah. I am; there is none else beside me. I am that I am.* O man, what more canst thou comprehend of God than this—*God is.* And thou thyself a worm. *Truth and submission; be this my motto; and my prayer, Sanctify me through thy truth; thy word is truth.*

P. L. U.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SANCTIFYING FAITH.

"Looking unto Jesus," through the glass of his word, we learn that we are "sanctified through faith in his blood;" and likewise through this medium alone we secure the promised blameless preservation "unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And as far as we may have walked in the highway of holiness, a blessed and happy experience clearly demonstrates this to be the truth, pillar and ground work of a holy church. Thus it is written, "Herein is our love made

perfect ;" and, " If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, *cleanseth* us from *all sin*." O ! for a constant application of the all-cleansing, atoning blood of the Lamb.

But mark the instrument of its application, and the channel through which this sanctifying blood flows so freely, in all its healing efficacy, to human hearts.

Our Father hath so loved us that he spared not his own well beloved and only begotten son, but delivered him up for us all ; and the Son so loved us, that he laid down his own life—" who gave himself for us," [not friends, but enemies,] poor, guilty, perishing rebels.

" He dies, the Friend of sinners dies."

" Behold your King !"—Jesus, the crucified ! Here is the inexhaustible fountain—

" So infinitely rich, so free !

Now opened for you and for me."

And now the agent of communication is given—" (for how shall he not with him freely give us all things ?)"—the Holy Spirit, our Light, Sanctifier, and Comforter : " Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 33.)

But once more. The instrument which opens the door of our hearts—or the great spiritual lever which hoists the flood gates of glory and opens the windows of heaven, from which the healing streams of full salvation flow most sweetly—is *faith* ! Living, practical faith—that divine principle wrought in the soul, which moves in the pure motives of love, with steadfast eye, " looking unto Jesus ;" which leads me now to cast myself (and all for time and eternity) unreservedly upon Christ as my sanctifying Saviour, with that sweet reliance and child-like confiding trust in his atoning blood, and affectionate confidence in his intercession, which at once steps off from the last plank of self on to the promise and gracious pledge of the immutable truth and veracity of our faithful Lord. " Faithful is he that calleth you, who also *will do it*." Amen, and " He doeth it : " it is done ; the glorious work cut short in righteousness. The blessed moment hath come : I die to sin, and learn the deep spiritual reckoning which is the true calculation of heaven ; and herein " I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me ;" and I do and will " reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi.) Here we walk in the light—" we walk by faith"—and have within, the " light of life ! " (John viii. 12.) This is holy ground ; for now we receive the dispensation of the Holy Ghost ; and touching the guilt, power, and pollution of sin, we feel and know " we are saved."

Thus we find all genuine experience coinciding with the scriptures ; demonstrating this glorious truth, that gospel salvation is a present and full salvation from sin. Also that this salvation is conditional, and the *one* condition is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; that faith which is inseparable from obedience. Thus the simple, and yet sublime, answer of the apostles to the grand question, than which a more important may not be proposed on earth. (Acts xvi. 30, 31.)

And of our Lord, "Thy faith hath saved thee ; go in peace, and sin no more," &c. And as there are degrees of this faith, we are saved in proportion to our faith. "According to your faith be it unto you ;" and O ! may the Spirit give us an understanding "remembrance" of this precious promise. Not according to your works, or imagination, good desires, nor even according to your feelings, be it unto you ; no, verily, this is not the true standard or measure—not the divine plan of salvation. But "thus saith the Lord"—"According to your faith be it unto you." (Matt. ix. 29.) And here every true disciple, ceasing "to trust in his own works," cries, "Lord, increase our faith ;" and thus "we, who have believed, *do enter into rest*"—yea, the rest of perfect love, or entire sanctification. O ! glorious transition this ! From the dark bondage and corruption of sin and Satan, to the glorious light, liberty and holiness of the gospel !

"Bless the Lord, O my soul," for such a renewing of the mind in the image of Christ—for such a happy transformation ; wherein we are "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,"—in perfect consecration.

"Here's my body, spirit, soul—

Only thou possess the whole."

Being bound upon the altar of God by the three-fold cord of faith, hope, and love, "a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service," we will sing hallelujah, with a living consciousness that "we have the mind of Christ."

"Every moment, Lord, we have

The merits of thy death."

But in our eagerness after sanctifying faith, and while we read, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," let us not seek for peace and happiness in faith itself, instead of seeking it by faith in Christ. And although it is written, "thy faith hath saved thee," and we thus properly talk of "saving faith," yet we do well to remember that faith, in all its valuableness and vast importance, is not our Saviour ; but only the eye that looks to him—the foot that goes to him—the hand that receives him.

But the foundation of faith standeth sure, "although heaven and earth pass away," although tongues shall cease and all other know-

ledge "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth" shall fail, yet this most glorious foundation, unspotted and unmoved, alone shall remain; for it is the immutable word of Jehovah! The "exceeding great and precious promises!" And whilst hope looks at the thing promised—

"Faith, mighty Faith, the promise sees—
And looks to this alone!"

And here we ought to walk carefully, and speak understandingly—for some "do greatly err not understanding the scriptures"—when pointing out the specific promises, and giving an exposition of them.

Thus we have marked a quotation, "believe ye have the things ye ask for and ye have them." But where? and how erroneous and dangerous the exposition given, and given repeatedly! It is noticed by Watson, with a pointed correction, and reasonable expose. Mark xi. 24. "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Note. "An ill use has sometimes been made of this passage; as though it meant that when praying, whatever we believe, that is, persuade ourselves that we receive, we do receive—an absurdity, and self-contradiction! Here, however, to believe does not signify to persuade ourselves into an opinion; but to trust, or to have faith in God. This trust must necessarily be regulated by God's own promise and warrant—and it is exercised in order that we may receive it. The sense therefore is, believe, trust, that ye shall receive them, and ye shall obtain them: that is, all things which God both expressly promises, and are as St. John says, "according to his will." "O Lord increase our faith"—"open our understandings to understand the scriptures;" that we may now receive Christ as our sanctifying Saviour—our Prophet, Priest, and King. Amen.

Brooksville, Me.

J. W. T.

THE EXCELLENCY AND NATURE OF DIVINE LOVE.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment." Very excellent things are spoken of love; it is the essence, the spirit, the life of all virtue. It is not only the first and great command, but it is all the commandments in one. Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are amiable, or honorable; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, they are all comprized in this one word, love. In this is perfection, and glory, and happiness: the royal law of heaven and earth is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Not that this forbids us to love any thing besides God. It implies, that we *love our brother also*. Nor yet does it forbid us (as some have strangely imagined) to take pleasure in any thing but God. To suppose this, is to suppose the Fountain of Holiness is directly the author of sin : since he has inseparably annexed pleasure to the use of those creatures which are necessary to sustain the life he has given us.

This, therefore, can never be the meaning of his command. What the real sense of it is, both our blessed Lord and his apostles tell us too frequently and too plainly to be misunderstood. They all, with one mouth, bear witness, that the true meaning of those several declarations,—The Lord thy God is one Lord : Thou shalt have no other gods but me : Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength : Thou shalt cleave unto him ; The *desire of thy soul* shall be to his name—is no other than this : The one perfect good shall be your one ultimate end. One thing shall ye desire for its own sake, the fruition of him that is All in All. One happiness will ye propose to your souls, even a union with him that made them : the having of *fellowship with the Father and the Son* : the being *joined to the Lord in one spirit*. One design ye are to pursue to the end of time, the enjoyment of God in time and in eternity. Desire other things so far as they tend to this. Love the creature—as it leads to the Creator. But in every step you take, be this the glorious point that terminates your view. Let every affection, and thought, and word, and work, be subordinate to this. Whatever ye desire or fear, whatever ye seek or shun, whatever ye think, speak, or do, be it in order to your happiness in God, the sole end as well as source of your being.—*Wesley*.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PROMISED LAND.

The writer of the following lines, when earnestly seeking the blessing of entire sanctification, opened the sacred volume, praying that she might there meet with some encouragement in her pursuit of the precious "pearl" of perfect love. The words that first met her eyes were "Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee ; go up and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee ; Fear not, neither be discouraged." Deut. i. 21.

Behold, the land, the "goodly land,"
Is set before thine eyes,
And Israel's God commandeth thee
To go and take the prize !

Guide to Christian Perfection.

Go up! though foes beset thy way;
 Though hosts thy course oppose:
 Go, for the Mighty One hath said
 I will subdue thy foes!

Go up! nor be dismayed, though hell,
 With all her wondrous might,
 Combine with earth to vanquish thee,
Press onward to the fight!

Go up! the victory is thine!
 Go, for the conquest's sure!
 The Omnipotent is thy defence—
 "Fear not," thou art secure.

Go! Anak's formidable sons
 Shall fall beneath thy hand!
 They all must yield to power divine;
 Go, and possess the land!

O, Canaan is a *blessed land!*
 Its fruits are rich and rare;
 And flowers of sweet, celestial bloom
 Perfume the balmy air!

There Heaven's effulgent glory beams
 O'er all the verdant plains;
 And Jesus—mighty conquerer!—
 Without a rival reigns!

Happy, thrice happy ones who breathe
 That holy atmosphere,
 And drink of those life-giving streams
 From fountains pure and clear!

No sin pollutes the spotless souls
 That dwell in that blest land;
 And Satan there assails in vain
 The bright, victorious band.

See them! How gloriously arrayed!
 All clothed with purest white;
 Their robes are dazzling as the sun,
 With *holy radiance* bright!

Go up! and join the victors, go!
 O, linger here no more,
 In sin's "dark howling wilderness;"
 Go up to Canaan's shore!

M.

Mount Holly, New Jersey.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

LETTER FROM A FRIEND.

Dear Brother,—I have been a reader of the Guide, from the time of its first publication; and have just finished the perusal of the last number. I can say with a sincere heart, that I love these monthly messengers of full salvation. Though I do not feel to express myself in so bold a manner, in regard to experience in the blessing of holiness, as some are enabled to, yet, for a few weeks past, I have indulged hope, in the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Christ. It may afford your readers some pleasure, to learn that the work of holiness has been advancing in this place.

Several of the brethren and sisters belonging to the Institution, attended the camp meeting held Aug. 31st, in the town of Ellington, where they received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Soon after returning home, prayer meetings were appointed, and attended more frequently than usual. And not much time elapsed, before meetings were commenced, and continued weekly, for the purpose of praying for the blessing of holiness. These meetings were signalized by the blessing of God. The shout of victory was heard in the midst. During the term which is now brought to a close, about eight or nine have found the priceless pearl of perfect love.

Glory to God for holiness! for full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. Ride on thou conquering King, until victory shall become universal. But while we rejoice at the triumphs of the Gospel, we would not forget the condition of the Church. A majority of professing Christians are living beneath their privileges, and the world is suffering in consequence of it, yea is it not true, that souls are perishing in consequence of it. O when will the Church arise, and put on her beautiful garments? When will she go forth, untrammelled by sin, proclaiming full salvation to a lost and dying world?

Wilbraham, Mass. Nov. 20th, 1840.

NOTE.—The above was signed "*A Student*," but we have omitted the signature because we have another correspondent of that name. ED.

LETTER BY MR. FLETCHER, TO MISS LOXDALE.

Grace, mercy, and truth, power, love, and joy, be multiplied to my dear friend, from the Father, Son, and Spirit, the threefold spring of life, light, and love. I never doubted your sincerity, my dear friend; and with pleasure I acknowledge, against the accuser of the brethren, that I can, without wavering, and with the assurance of faith and love,

confess you a member of my Lord, a child of my heavenly Father, and a fellow heir of the kingdom purchased for penitent believers. May the accuser fall as lightning, and his accusation be cast down by this word of my testimony. I believe, too, that you have received more than forgiving love. See John xx. 22. But whether you have received the other Comforter in his fullness, or the pentecostal gift of the Holy Ghost, what it concerns you to inquire into. You may know that measure of grace by the following marks. It is great grace, and abundant life; it destroys self, it fills with power from on high, it perfects in one, it perfects in love. It is, at least, accompanied with the gift of prophecy.* It makes us always to triumph in Christ.

Ah! my friend, I sympathize with you in the weakness of your body, which does not permit you to take the kingdom of heaven by the violence of that praying, agonizing faith, which some can put forth when their souls come to a pinching want, or to a birth of desire. Take two or three observations about it: (1) There are two kinds of wrestlings; the one, in which the Spirit of God in us is very active, and we are almost passive. You may thus passively wrestle, if the power of the Highest helps your infirmities. So some dying persons wrestle sometimes. (2.) There is another wrestling, in which we are very active, and the Spirit of God helps us imperceptibly. Follow, seek, wait—quietly, meekly, humbly wait for the former power. The latter kind of wrestling may not be so suitable for you. I advise you to imitate the Virgin Mary. Let strong people wrestle in the second manner, but do you gently, believingly, lifting up your head in calm expectation, say, till you are overwhelmed with the power from on high, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to thy word.” For, as for me, I can do nothing but wait for thy salvation, and give glory to thy word of promise.” You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you. Believe and pray with the will and the understanding, more than with the passions; with your sublimer, rather than with your inferior powers. I rejoice in you, your aunt, and sister, as of three who will be of a hundred and twenty in Shropshire, called to be all of one heart and one soul, all believing, loving, prophesying. Remember me to them in Christian regard, and permit my spirit to twist itself with the threefold cord, when you pull blessings from heaven upon yourselves and the church. I thank you for the direction to Mr. Wesley. I shall now forward my letter to him. I am dear Miss Loxdale’s affectionate servant.

* That is, speaking to the edification of those with whom they converse.

GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

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NO. 10.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS,

HAVING A CONNECTION WITH THE PRACTICE OF HOLINESS.

LXVIII.

When I witness the erroneous estimate which men often place on certain kinds of human knowledge, I am reminded of one of the remarkable sayings which abound in the practical writings of St. Augustine. "Unhappy is he who knows every thing else, and does not know God. Happy is he who knows God, though he should be ignorant of every thing else."

LXIX.

There are two classes of Christians; those who live chiefly by emotion, and those who live chiefly by faith. The first class, those who live chiefly by emotion; remind one of ships, that move by the outward impulse of winds operating upon sails. They are often at a dead calm, often out of their course, and sometimes driven back. And it is only when the winds are fair and powerful that they move onward with rapidity. The other class, those who live chiefly by faith, remind one of the magnificent steamers which cross the Atlantic, which are moved by an interior and permanent principle; and which, setting at defiance all ordinary obstacles, advance steadily and swiftly to their destination, through calm and storm, through cloud and sunshine.

LXX.

There are some heathen philosophers, such as Socrates, Cicero, and Seneca, that occasionally announce moral and religious truths of great value. Truths which are susceptible of an interpretation that will bring them into close harmony with the practical doctrines of Christianity. "The fewer things a man wants," said Socrates on a certain occasion, "the nearer he is to God."

LXXI.

A parent who loves an obedient and affectionate child, will sometimes give him a picture book, a musical instrument, or some other thing, as a token of his confidence and love. But if the parent should find the child so much taken up with the picture book as to forget the parental commands, and to be getting into ways

of disobedience, he will take it away. And thus God sometimes imparts especial spiritual consolations to his children; but if he finds them, as he sometimes does, more taken up with the joys he gives than they are with himself and his commands, he will remove them. And he does it in great mercy. It is certainly better to lose the gift than to be deprived of the Giver; to lose our consolations, than to lose our God.

LXXII.

The past is gone; the future has no existence. The PRESENT, which a certain writer calls the "divine moment," or moment of God, is the only period of time which is really committed to us. As there is no other point of time in which we can really serve God but this, which is present to us, the language of the heart should ever be, What wilt thou have me to do now?

LXXIII.

All deliberate deviation from the will of God necessarily implies a degree of moral imperfection. If we would be perfect, therefore, our wills must, in the direction of their movement, be completely blended with the will of God. But this does not imply the annihilation of the human will, nor even an obstruction of its appropriate action. It is a correct saying of Francis de Sales, that our will is "never so much enslaved, as when we serve our lusts; and never so free, as when it is devoted to the will of God."

LXXIV.

Many, who do not love God with the whole heart, nevertheless say that they *desire*, that they *wish* so to love him. Oh, blinded ones! How can this possibly be, when they are so obviously unwilling to renounce the pursuits and pleasures of the world, by which God is offended and separated from them!

LXXV.

Often the water that is inclosed in a glass vessel appears to the unaided eye, clear and pure. But if a ray of bright light suddenly strikes the vessel and illuminates it, we at once discover various impurities, which had before escaped our notice. So our sins have many hiding places, which conceal them from the natural conscience. And we should ask light from God, a clear, heavenly illumination, that we may find them out.

LXXVI.

When in the instruction and admonition of others, we have faithfully done our duty, we shall be willing, if we are in a right state of heart, to leave the event, with entire calmness of mind, in the hands of God. We know not what shall profit, whether this or that; but we may be assured, to say the least, that God will do his part, as well as we have done ours, although perhaps in a different way from what we expected. "I have observed," says Bunyan, "that a word cast in by the bye, hath done more execution in a sermon, than all that was spoken besides. Sometimes also, when I have thought I did no good, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I should catch them, I have fished for nothing."

LXXVII.

It is undoubtedly a duty to reprove, on suitable occasions, those who are not perfect before God. But it is sometimes the case, that the reproof of others, especially when sharply and frequently uttered, is an evidence of our own imperfection. It too sadly shows, that we have not that spirit of entire self-sacrifice and heart-felt charity which, in the language of the apostle, thinketh no evil, but beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

LXXVIII.

If at any time we are injured by others, and find feelings of anger arising in our hearts, we should ever be careful, before attempting to reprove and amend them, to obtain a victory over our own hearts. Otherwise our reproofs, although fully deserved, and although it may be our duty to give them, will be likely to be in vain.

LXXIX.

We must not only do right things, but do them in the right manner. The manner of a holy person is generally characterized, as compared with that of others, by a great degree of meekness and quietude, particularly in the ordinary intercourse of life. And this for three reasons. 1. A religious one, viz., that his whole soul rests calmly in the will of God; and therefore, ordinarily, he sees no occasion either for inward or outward perturbation. 2. A philosophical one, viz., an outward perturbation or excitement of manner reacts upon the mind, and sometimes stimulates the inward emotions and passions so much as partially to take them out of our own control, which is injurious. 3. A practical one, viz., a quiet and subdued manner, when flowing from deep religious principle, has an exceedingly impressive and happy effect upon the mass of mankind, especially upon persons of fre-intelligence and cultivation. Still there are some occasions, perhaps not very frequent, when an energy and even violence of manner is not inconsistent with holiness.

LXXX.

It is a sure sign that our heart is not perfect before God, and does not entirely rest in him, when, like the unconverted Athenians of old, we are anxious to hear or to tell some new thing, when we are exceedingly troubled about our own reputation among men, and when in regard to any thing of a worldly nature, we exhibit an eager and precipitate state of mind.

LXXXI.

We are at liberty to take to ourselves the pleasure which naturally results from the use or qualification of the senses, such as eating and drinking, when such use or qualification occurs in the providence of God and with the divine permission; but if in our thoughts we unnecessarily anticipate such pleasures, or, when they are past, recall them to recollection in a sensual manner, it is a melancholy evidence that God is not the full and satisfying portion of our souls, and that our heart is not wholly right with him.

LXXXII.

While we admit the duty of ever bearing the cross, we are to remember that we must bear it just where God, in his providential dealings, sees fit to impose it upon us, without assuming the responsibility of either seeking or shunning it. We shall find that God has placed it in the whole course of our life, and at precisely the right place; and all he requires of us is to bear it with a faithful heart when we meet it.

LXXXIII.

Our advancement in the Christian life may be said to depend upon one thing, viz., whether we wish to direct God, or are willing to resign ourselves to be wholly
T. C. U.

DIRECTED BY HIM.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERIOR OR HIDDEN LIFE.

NO. 1.

SOME MARKS OR TRAITS OF THE HIDDEN LIFE.

There is a modification or form of religious experience which may conveniently, and probably with a considerable degree of propriety, be denominated the Interior or Hidden Life. As this form of religious experience is much in advance of that which so often lingers darkly and doubtfully at the threshold of the Christian's career, and as it implies an intimate union with the divine mind, we may perhaps regard the Psalmist as making an indistinct allusion to it, when he says, (Ps. cxix. 114.) "Thou art my **HIDING PLACE** and my shield." And again, (Ps. xxxii. 7,) "Thou art my **HIDING PLACE**; thou shalt preserve me from trouble." And again, (Ps. xix. 1,) "He, that dwelleth in the **SECRET PLACE** of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Perhaps the Apostle Paul makes some allusion to this more advanced and matured condition of the religious existence, when he says, (1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10,) "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the **HIDDEN** wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for those that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.*" And does not the Saviour himself sometimes recognize the existence of an Interior or Hidden Life, unknown to the world, and unknown, to a considerable extent, even to many that are denominated Christians? "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. To him that *overcometh* will I give to eat of the **HIDDEN MANNA**, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a **NEW** name written, which *no man knoweth save he that RECEIVETH* it."

The phrase, Hidden Life, which is appropriately and peculiarly the life of all those who, advancing beyond the first elements of Christianity, may properly be said to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, indicates a vitality or living principle, which differs in various particulars from every other form of life.

I. In the first place, the life of those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, may be called a Hidden Life, because its moving principles, its interior and powerful springs of action, are not known to the world. In the ordinary forms of the religious state, there is such a mixture of worldly and religious motives, that the world can form, if not a positive, yet an approximated estimation of the principles which regulate the conduct of its possessors. But of the springs and movement in the purified or Hidden Life, except by dark and uncertain conjecture, they know comparatively nothing. They can form no adequate idea of that higher Christian philosophy which inculcates the love of holiness for holiness' sake. Perhaps it would not be too much to say, that an ignorant child knows as much of the principles and process by which a ship is guided across the Atlantic, as an unconverted person does of the impulsive and regulative principles of that soul whose

life can be truly said to be "hid with Christ in God." And does not this agree with what we are told in the Scriptures? "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14.

II. In the second place, the life which we are considering, may properly be called a Hidden Life, because the animating principle, the vital or operative element, is not so much in itself as in another. It is a life grafted into another life. It is the life of the soul incorporated into the life of Christ; and in such a way, that, while it has a distinct vitality, it has so very much in the sense in which the branch of a tree may be said to have a distinct vitality from the root. "I am the vine," says the Saviour, "ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." The life flows out of Christ into this form of the Christian life; and in such a degree that the subject of it is distinctly conscious, or at least has a full conviction, that his spiritual existence, and strength, and growth, emanate from that divine source.

III. In the third place, the Hidden Life has a claim to the descriptive epithet which we have proposed to apply to it, because it is a life in which the soul is brought into a sweet and mysterious nearness and union with God. It would hardly be too much to say that the soul has, in some important sense, changed its locality. It has not only withdrawn its affections from the world, which separated it for so long a time from its Creator, but mounting upward, it experiences a mystical reunion, a most holy and delightful mingling with the infinitude and blessedness of the divine nature. Not an extinction of our personality, for that would be a view false and pernicious; but an union, although the similitude gives but an imperfect idea of the reality, like that of the planets to the sun, which revolve in its attraction; and are not only bound to it by a strong and indissoluble tie, but are ever clothed in its light. The soul may be said, in the experience of this interior life, to live *in* God as well as *with* him. God is its centre and its home; not only its sustaining power, but its encircling radiance.

IV. The Hidden Life is different not only from the life of unconverted men, but even in some degree from that of immature Christians, in this respect, that it is almost constantly the subject of new and most interesting religious experiences. It seems to be evident from the Scriptures, that they, who love God with the *whole* heart, not only are beloved by Him in return, but that He will condescend to manifest his love. And this he does by presenting new views of truth, duty, and happiness; by inspiring sentiments of gratitude and confiding trust, and by spiritually passing before them, and conversing with them, as a man converseth with his brother. Happy is the man who is in such a case. He is united by a chain stronger than adamant, even by Christ himself, to the throne of the great God, the holy and immutable throne.

And we may add here, that the Hidden Life, of which we have endeavored, in these few words, to *give* a general, rather than a specific and exact idea, hath ever had an existence. In the most disastrous periods of the church, there have always been some, (a seven thousand, perchance,) who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Ministers may have become corrupt; churches may have been infected with unholy leaven; the rich and the learned may have been unanimous in their rejection of every thing except the mere superficialities of religion; and yet it will

be found that God, who values the blood of his beloved Son too highly to let it remain inoperative, has raised his altar in individual hearts. In the dwellings of the poor, in solitary places, in the recesses of vallies and mountains, he has written his name upon regenerated minds; and the incense of their adoration, remote from public notice, has gone silently up to heaven. They had heard nothing of the disgraceful schisms of the church; they had known nothing of the celebrated names which have been the watchwords of passing sectaries; but they had read and deeply meditated their Bibles; and the name, the blessed name, the name of *Jesus*, was precious to them. A happy moment has it been, when, sick of theological contests, I have found in some retired place, those with whom I could take sweet counsel together on the things of the Lamb of God. My soul has melted within me to find that God, when driven from the abodes of the great, and even from his own sanctuary, still condescends to raise up trophies of his grace, and to erect, as it were, spiritual temples in the wilderness. They stand there, bright in their solitude; and ready to be adorned with everlasting crowns.

A. K.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—May the blessed Lord now help me to write that which he will bless greatly to the benefit of your soul. With regard to the subject of your letter, holiness of heart and the means of attaining it, I can say with truth that I am more and more delighted with holiness in itself, and with God's blessed, delightful way of bringing his people into the enjoyment of it. It is only to find God's exceeding great and precious promises, and place our feet on these, and trust Christ to fulfil them, just as you trust a responsible and punctual man to fulfil a business engagement, or to meet a note at bank at the specified time. You say the credit of such a man is at stake, and he, therefore, will redeem his paper for his own sake. And now I ask, if the credit of the Lord Jesus Christ is not at stake for the fulfilment of every one of God's exceeding great and precious promises to every soul that confides in them? We know that if a man cannot or will not redeem his notes, his concern breaks down; and so if Christ either could not or would not fulfil God's covenant and oath to those who confide in him, I ask if his kingdom would not at once become a broken down concern before all the universe?

But we have no such catastrophe to fear. Christ, for his own name's sake, will see every promise of God strictly and entirely fulfilled to us, for which we place our confidence in him. But if we treat God's exceeding great and precious promises like the protested notes of a bankrupt institution, which are thrown aside among waste papers as of no possible value, and regard Christ as one in whom it

is not safe to place confidence for the fulfilment of the promises of a God of truth, we may expect to find these promises and Christ, the surety of them, just as our unbelief regards them. We have placed, in that case, no confidence in Christ, and hence no confidence is betrayed though these promises remain unfulfilled. But when we have trusted Christ for the fulfilment of these promises, they must be fulfilled or his faithfulness must fail; an event which, could it transpire, would fill all heaven with infinite consternation and dismay.

Now it is written, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." On this promise of the living God, I take my stand, and, looking up to Christ in whom the promises of God are all yea and amen to the glory of God by me, I place a full confidence in him that he will see that promise fulfilled to me. On his faithfulness I rely for that blessing. Now I ask how earth or hell can prevent the fulfilment of that promise? Again we learn, in the first chapter of the gospel by Luke, that "God has covenanted and sworn that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life; and that he has raised up Christ, an horn of salvation for us, to fulfil that covenant and oath."

Now, brother, suppose that you place a full confidence in Christ, *your* horn of salvation, for the fulfilment of God's covenant and oath to you. In other words, you take Christ as your security, and as good and sufficient security, that this covenant and oath of God shall have an entire fulfilment in yourself from this time henceforth and for ever, and go on continually in the full exercise of such a faith. In that case can God's covenant and oath fail? Impossible! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the words of the living God shall not pass away. Try it. Do, my brother, try it, if you have not already. Take hold on the promise and risk every thing on the tried faithfulness of Christ.

Yours, &c.

Newark, N. J., Feb. 20, 1841.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

EXPERIENCE OF A LADY.

DEAR FATHER MERRITT,—As you specially requested me to give you a written account of my experience in regard to the subject of entire sanctification, I will endeavor to do so, and I pray that the

"Holy Ghost may bring all things to my remembrance" that will tend to throw light upon this great and glorious subject.

At the age of ten and a half years, I was led to the knowledge of Jesus by the remission of sins. My peace and joy in the Lord abounded; and for some weeks subsequent to my justification, I felt nothing contrary to *perfect love which casteth out fear*; constantly rejoicing in God, and endeavoring to serve him with all my powers. My heart seemed to cleave to him with increasing intensity of love and firmness of purpose. But soon I felt the rising of depraved nature, and had to contend with evil dispositions that I discovered lurking within, and rebelling against the King of kings and Lord of lords, who, though he reigned in my heart, had not yet fully destroyed the man of sin, but had subjugated him, and bound him, (as it were, hand and foot,) so that he could not have dominion over me. Yet, though thus subdued, he still remained, and was continually striving to regain the ascendancy, and usurp the throne of which the adorable Redeemer had possession. To prevent sin from having dominion over me, was my unceasing effort, and my soul was pained and grieved inexpressibly, to feel the workings of this vile enemy within: often did I weep in extreme anguish of spirit on account of it, for I was not then aware that it was my blessed privilege to have this foe cast out and utterly banished from my heart. But shortly after this period, there came a holy man of God, to preach in the place of my residence. As a good and faithful shepherd, he soon sought out the lambs of the flock, and as I was the youngest and most tender one, he made me an object of his peculiar care. With unremitting solicitude he watched over me, and assiduously strove to guide me into "the good and the right way of the Lord." He did, indeed, lead me, (with all the flock of which he had the pastoral care,) to living fountains of water—and green pastures of grace. Most clearly, and forcibly, and constantly, he preached the doctrine of full salvation, as the privilege of all the children of God, and O, with what avidity did my hungry, panting soul, seize this living bread, and drink this life-giving water! This was just what I wanted! In the fullness of my soul I exclaimed—

"This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief a burden long has been,
Because I was not saved from sin.

And now—

The King's highway of holiness
I'll go, for all his paths are peace!"

O, what unutterable joy sprang up in my soul, in the blissful hope of being delivered out of the hands of my enemies, that I might

serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of my life. From that hour, in which it was first presented to me as my privilege in Christ Jesus, I sought it with unremitting diligence and earnestness, and I think I may say, I that hour presented myself to God "a living sacrifice,"—that hour gave myself to him "in the bonds of an everlasting covenant"—and that hour began to "reckon myself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:" (this, I think, was about six months after my conversion to God:) yet I did not, at that time, receive the evidence that the work was fully wrought: it was several months after, that I was made to "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," in possession of that precious gift, the witness of the Spirit that my heart was cleansed from all unrighteousness. And never, never could I forget the felicity,—the ineffable bliss of that hour! So great was the "weight of glory" which filled my soul, that it prostrated my body, deprived me of physical strength, and of all my external senses: for some time I was unconscious of what was passing around me; I was in communion with heaven, and my blessed Redeemer seemed so near to me, that I could see him face to face, and so was I overwhelmed with the glory of his countenance, and so captivated with the words of unutterable love which he spoke to my heart, that I could neither see nor hear aught beside. When I received power to speak, I endeavored to tell those around me "how great things God had done for me;" and I was afterward informed that such was the power of the Holy Spirit accompanying my words, that all were melted to tears, and many commenced seeking to be "made partakers of like precious faith." How clearly did this demonstrate that it was the work of God—for a little, ignorant, feeble child to be thus empowered to speak words that would affect the hearts of persons advanced in years and in knowledge! How manifestly was divine "strength made perfect in weakness!" It is to magnify the grace of God, that I thus allude to the effect produced by the relation of the manifestation of divine love to me when a child. I am fully sensible that it was all of grace. What a confirmation of the truth of the words of inspiration—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord!" From that time, I went forward in the way of holiness with undeviating steps, and rapid pace, for some length of time, (I think about nine or ten months,) and then, by listening to the advice of some, whom I considered wise counsellors, I had a season of spiritual darkness, which, however, was of short duration. I was advised to cease professing the attainments of holiness; they said I could show it by my life and conversation, without professing it; and it would appear more humble and becoming, especially as I was a little child; and I was always ready to receive instruction and counsel from older Christians,

and therefore yielded to their opinion, believing they were influenced by the good Spirit. But I soon discovered that the holy flame in my heart began to grow dim ; I was alarmed, and began to search for the cause, praying with great fervency of soul, to have the fullness of love restored to me, which I felt I had in a measure lost ; yet I could appeal to the Omniscient one, and say, "Thou knowest that I love thee ! Thou knowest that since I laid myself upon the altar, and gave myself an offering to thee, I have never taken the sacrifice away ; I have never removed the offering thence ; I am thine, blessed Jesus, only thine, wholly thine ! I will ever be thine ! But where, O, where, is that fullness of peace, and joy, and light, and love ? Where is that sweet communion with him whom my soul loveth—that constant intercourse with heaven ? I cannot, will not, rest without this ! After having drank at the fountain of bliss so copiously, I cannot be satisfied with a scanty supply. The holiness I must have ! I did not long wrestle thus in earnest believing prayer, before the windows of heaven were opened, and a plenteous effusion of holy love poured into my heart, and again I rejoiced in possession of the fullness of love. I then saw clearly that it was my duty to speak more frequently on this subject, and on every suitable occasion to proclaim the riches and the glory of this great salvation. I discerned more perfectly the way in which I ought to walk : that I must look to God's word and Spirit for direction, and not depend so much on frail mortals for guidance. The language of my heart from that time was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?" and I was enabled to pursue the narrow path with renewed ardor and diligence, and made rapid advancement in the knowledge and love of God. For several years my course was steady, and my happiness in God continually increasing and abounding. In the year 1835, I left the place of my birth, and residence from my childhood up, and came to the place of my present residence. In the Methodist society here I found some of "the excellent of the earth," but the Church in general were not deeply devoted to God. I soon discovered that there was a peculiar repugnance felt by many to the profession of entire sanctification, and was informed that several who had for many years enjoyed this blessing, had long since ceased to profess it. I thought, now if I profess it, I shall stand entirely alone, and I shall be considered arrogant and assuming. They will say, there are more mothers and fathers in Israel who have so long shown the fruits of holiness, and they do not speak of it publicly—and lo, here comes a stranger, and elevates herself above these devoted souls, who are well known as the excellent of the earth. This was too much for me—for by reasoning with the evil one I was, like Samson, "shorn of my strength." I yielded to the tempter, and resolved to hide the gift of God that was in me, though it was still my purpose to live wholly devoted to God, and to

guard the sacred treasure of holy love in my soul with great care : the thought of losing this precious pearl, was the most distant from my mind.

But alas, how vain were my efforts to retain this hallowed enjoyment ! I had grieved the Holy Spirit,—clouds and darkness gathered round me, and I was filled with gloom and sadness. I besought the Lord, in fervent supplication, to remove the clouds, and again reveal to me “the brightness of his face,” for without it I could not rest,—I could not live. This earth seemed indeed as a barren wilderness, and my soul found no food, no sustenance—it was famishing, dying. While engaged in prayer, my gracious, condescending Lord dispelled the darkness, and with unutterable joy I saw again the out-beamings of his glorious countenance, who was “the life of my delights,” and again went on my way rejoicing. But alas, “the fear of man, which bringeth a snare,” again brought me into darkness. Again I concealed the light which God had commanded me to set up before the world that they might glorify him ; and what wonder that he withdrew it from me, when I would not improve it in showing forth his praise ? But in the ever abounding goodness of God he again looked upon his rebellious child, and through Jesus, whose all-atoning merits I pleaded, and by faith could claim, he received me graciously, and again owned me for his child !

But—shall I say it ?—after all this I again hesitated to be a witness of the efficacy of his all-cleansing blood publicly, though I did speak of it to individuals, and urged it upon them as their privilege, and endeavored to be diligent in every good word and work, but still “kept back a part of the price,” and consequently my enjoyments again declined. This vacillating course I continued to pursue till the winter 1840, in the month of January ; when I was led to seek, with all my heart, an entire conformity to the image of Jesus.

One day, after having “entered my closet and shut the door,” determining never to leave it till this blessed work was wrought in my heart, the Spirit of God revealed to me that I must come to a point to which I had hitherto been unwilling to come, or I could never receive the blessing for which I was seeking. I must resolve and covenant with God that I would no more hesitate to be a “witness” for him, no more yield to the fear of man, but be willing to bear the reproach of Christ,—be willing to forsake all and follow him fully—or he would take his Holy Spirit from me, and I should no more enjoy his favor. The time had now come when I must be a whole Christian, or no Christian ; and now was the severe test. Could I bear to have my “name cast out as evil”—to be called enthusiastic, presumptuous, arrogant ? I thought of the priceless worth of the treasure I was to receive, the ineffable bliss I should enjoy, if I would make the sacrifice ; and O, in that moment the glory, the value, the

exquisite delight of that "unspeakable gift" absorbed my whole soul. I did not hesitate. I could not. I said, Lord, take my soul, my life, my all! I will forsake all and follow thee! I'll

" Gladly reckon all things loss,
So I but Jesus gain!"

Yes, I will count it all joy even to be persecuted for Christ's sake, and rejoice to be counted worthy to bear the glorious shame of my Redeemer's cross! My gracious, long-suffering God accepted the sacrifice, and once again embraced me in the arms of his mercy! O, what bliss did I feel in realizing that he had indeed accepted the offering, and sealed me his! that henceforth I was "to live, not unto myself, but unto him that died for me and rose again;" that I was now to work, and speak, and think, for God alone. And from that time how gladly have I run at the bidding of my Lord! I have not stopped to ask if this or that would be pleasing to the church or to the world,—if in so doing or speaking I should gain the approbation of my fellow-mortals. I only ask, Will it please God? Is it the will of my adorable Redeemer for me to do or speak this or that? and whatever I believe to be in accordance with the word and spirit of God, that I endeavor to do. "And the peace of God, that passeth understanding, keeps my heart and mind through Christ Jesus." O, the blessedness of having a single eye! one object, one desire, one purpose, one aim—for God to live and die! With deepest sorrow and regret I retrospect the period when, through my unfaithfulness, I grieved the blessed Spirit of God. How many were the dark seasons through which I passed, by reason of the clouds which I brought upon my own soul, when I might have enjoyed perpetual sunshine, had I diligently hearkened to the voice of the Lord, and faithfully obeyed his commands. O, had I always been willing to deny myself and take up my cross, how much farther should I have advanced in the blessed way of holiness! I am confident that this is the only way to retain the perfect love of God. There must be the spirit of sacrifice. We must be "crucified to the world, and the world to us," and our "life hid with Christ in God." There must be no compromise with self, or earth, or sin; there must be an entire renunciation of all we have and are, if we would be conformed to the likeness of him who knew no sin—if we would have the Saviour to dwell in us and walk in us—if we would be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

I would remark, with reference to my refusal or unwillingness to confess what God had wrought in me, I did not do this with a clear and full conviction that I was acting contrary to the divine will. Satan managed it so that I did not discern it thus. There was always something presented to my mind as a reasonable excuse for not pro-

fessing this attainment: it was in no case my intention to act contrary to the divine requirement, or to incur the displeasure of Heaven. Yet I cannot believe that there was an entire abandonment of self at those times when I was led into that fatal snare; there was not a forsaking of all for Christ, otherwise I should have been so entirely under the Spirit's influence that I should have been guided into all truth, and would have seen clearly the way in which I should walk. From this I have learned the necessity of cleaving closely to the side of my Saviour, and of looking to Jesus, moment by moment, to keep my feet from falling, and to save me from the power of the tempter; and while I live thus near to God, Satan, nor earth, nor self, nor sin, can have any influence over me. Pray for me that I may be preserved "blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

With great respect, believe me yours,

M.

We publish the following "Test of a New Creature," not for a cursory reading, but as a sort of text book for the Christian on self-examination, sincerely hoping that so valuable an auxiliary will be duly appreciated by all whose souls are panting for "the fulness of God." May the Searcher of hearts bless it to our good in seeking a knowledge of ourselves.

THE TEST OF A NEW CREATURE:

OR, HEADS OF EXAMINATION FOR ADULT CHRISTIANS.

BY MR. FLETCHER.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Whatever is the state of one wholly renewed, must be, in a less degree, the state of all "who are born from above:" and whatever is the fruit of perfect holiness, to walk by the same rule must be the way to obtain the same salvation. The image of God is one, grace is the same; and to be in Christ is to believe, and have the fellowship of his Spirit.

Regeneration differs only in degrees of strength and soundness. In our early justification the Divine life is comparatively small, and mixed with sin; but when perfectly renewed, we are strong, and every part pure, holding by faith that salvation which makes us one with the Son of God.

The law given in our first state, and the law required by the gospel,—the covenant of works and the covenant of faith,—are different. Whatever we see in the example of Jesus, and whatever he promises to bestow on his followers, are unquestionable privileges of Gospel

salvation. Neither is the whole of this salvation, of our justification, or of our renewal after the image of God, finished, till the resurrection, when we shall "see him as he is," and beholding him face to face, "his name shall be written on our foreheads." Nor can we ever have so much of the likeness of God as to be incapable of more; but rather the more we obtain of his image and favor, the more we are fitted to receive for ever and ever.

HEADS OF EXAMINATION.

I. Do I feel any pride; or am I partaker of the meek and lowly mind that was in Jesus? Am I dead to all desire of praise? If any despise me, do I like them the worse for it? Or if they love and approve me, do I love them more on that account? Am I willing to be accounted useless, and of no consequence,—glad to be made of no reputation? Do humiliations give me real pleasure, and is it the language of my heart,

Make me little and unknown,
Loved and prized by God alone?

II. Does God bear witness in my heart that it is purified? that in all things I please him?

III. Is the life I live "by the faith of the Son of God," so that Christ dwelleth in me? Is Christ the life of all my affections and designs, as my soul is the life of my body? Is my eye single, and my soul full of light,—all eye within and without; always watchful?

IV. Have I always the presence of God? Does no cloud come between God and the eye of my faith? Can I "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks?"

V. Am I saved from the fear of man? Do I speak plainly to all, neither fearing their frowns nor seeking their favors? Have I no shame of religion; and am I always ready to confess Christ, to suffer with his people, and to die for his sake?

VI. Do I deny myself at all times, and take up my cross as the Spirit of God leads me? Do I embrace the cross of every sort, being willing to give up my ease and convenience to oblige others; or do I expect them to conform to my hours, ways, and customs? Does the cross sit light upon me, and am I willing to suffer all the will of God? Can I trample on pleasure and pain? Have I

A soul inured to pain,
To hardship, grief, and loss;
Bold to take up, firm to sustain,
The consecrated cross?

VII. Are my bodily senses, and outward things, all sanctified to me? Do I not seek my own things, to please myself? Do I seek

grace more for God's honor than my own profit, preferring the glory of God to all in earth or heaven ; the Giver to the gift ?

VIII. Am I " poor in spirit ? " Do I " take pleasure in infirmities, necessities, distresses, reproaches ; " so that out of weakness, want, and danger, I may cast myself on the Lord ? Have I no false shame in approaching God ? Do I seek to be saved, as a poor sinner, by grace alone ?

IX. Do I not " lean to my own understanding ? " Am I ready to give up the point when contradicted, unless conscience forbid ? Am I easy to be persuaded ? Do I esteem every one better than myself ? Am I as willing to be a cypher as to be useful, and does my zeal burn bright, notwithstanding this willingness to be nothing ?

X. Have I no false wisdom, goodness, strength ; as if the grace I feel were my own ? Do I never take that glory to myself which belongs to Christ ? Do I feel my want of Christ, as much as ever, to be my all ? and do I draw near to God, as poor and needy, only presenting before him his well beloved Son ? Can I say,

" Every moment, Lord, I need
The merit of thy death ?
I shall hang upon my God,
Till I thy perfect glory see,
Till the sprinkling of thy blood
Shall speak me up to thee ? "

Do I find joy in being thus nothing, empty, undeserving, giving all the glory to Christ ? Or do I wish that grace made me something, instead of God being all ?

XI. Have I meekness ? Does it bear rule over all my tempers, affections, and desires ; so that my hopes, fears, joy, zeal, love, and hatred, are duly balanced ? Do I feel no disturbance from others, and do I desire to give none ? If any offend me, do I still love them, and make it an occasion to pray for them ? If condemned by the world, do I entreat ; if condemned by the godly, am I one in whose mouth there is no reproof ; replying only as conscience, and not as impatient nature dictates ? If in the wrong, do I confess it ? If in the right, do I submit, being content to do well, and suffer for it ? It is the sin of superiors to be overbearing, of inferiors to be stubborn ; if, then, I am a servant, do I yield not only to the gentle, but to the froward, committing my cause in silence to God ; or if a master, do I " show all long suffering ? " The Lord of all was " as he that serveth. " If I am the greatest, do I make myself least, " and the servant of all ; " if a teacher, am I lowly, meek, and patient, not conceited, self willed, nor dogmatic ? Am I ready to give up the claims of respect due to age, station, parent, master, &c. ; or do I rigidly exact those demands ?

XII. Do I possess resignation; am I content with whatever is, or may be; seeing that God, the Author of all events, does, and will do, all for my good? Do I desire nothing but God, willing to part with all, if the Lord manifests his will for my so doing? Do I "know how to abound," and yet not gratify unnecessary wants; but being content with things needful, do I faithfully and freely dispose of all the rest for the help of others? Do I know how to suffer need? Is my confidence unshaken while I feel the distress of poverty, and have the prospect of future want, while, humanly speaking, strangling were better than life? And, in these circumstances, do I pity those who, having plenty, waste it in excess instead of helping me?

XIII. Am I just; doing in all things as I would others should do unto me? Do I render due homage to those above me, not presuming on their lenity and condescension? As a superior, do I exercise no undue authority, taking no advantage of the timidity, respect, or necessity of any man? Do I consider the great obligation superiority lays me under, of being lowly and kind, and of setting a good example?

XIV. Am I temperate, using the world and not abusing it? Do I receive outward things in the order of God, making earth a scale to heaven? Is the satisfaction I take in the creation consistent with my being dead to all below, and a mean of leading me more to God? Is the turn of my mind and temper in due subjection, not leading me to any extreme, either of too much silence, or of too much talkativeness, of reserve, or freedom?

XV. Am I courteous, not severe? Suiting myself to all with sweetness? Striving to give no one pain, but to gain and win all for their good?

XVI. Am I vigilant; redeeming time, taking every opportunity of doing good; or do I spare myself, being careless about the souls and bodies to which I might do good? Can I do no more than I do? Do I perform the most servile offices, such as require labor and humiliation, with cheerfulness? Is my conversation always seasoned with salt, at every time administering some kind of favor to those I am with?

XVII. Do I "love God with all my heart?" Do I constantly present myself, my time, substance, talents, and all that I have, a living sacrifice? Is every thought brought into subjection to Christ? Do I like, or dislike, only such things as are pleasing or displeasing to God?

XVIII. Do I love God with all my strength, and are my spiritual faculties always vigorous? Do I give way to no sinful languor? Am I always on my watch? Do not business, worldly care, and conversation, damp my fervor and zeal for God?

XIX. Do I love my neighbor as myself; every man for Christ's

listen to no groundless surmises, nor judge from appearances? Can I bridle my tongue, never speaking of the faults of another, but with a view to do good; and when I am obliged to do it, have I the testimony that I sin not? Have I that love which hopeth, believeth, and endureth all things?

XX. How am I in my sleep? If Satan presents an evil imagination, does my will immediately resist, or give way to it?

XXI. Do I bear the infirmities of age or sickness, without seeking to repair the decays of nature by strong liquors; or do I make Christ my sole support, casting the burden of a feeble body into the arms of his mercy?

Many consider that "perfect love which casteth out fear" as instantaneous; all grace is so; but what is given in a moment, is enlarged and established by diligence and fidelity. That which is instantaneous in its descent, is perfective in its increase.

This is certain,—too much grace cannot be desired or looked for; and to believe and obey with all the power we have, is the highway to receive all we have not. There is a day of pentecost for believers; a time when the Holy Ghost descends abundantly. Happy they who receive most of this perfect love, and of that establishing grace, which may preserve them from such falls and decays as they were before liable to.

Jesus, Lord of all, grant thy purest gifts to every waiting disciple. Enlighten us with the knowledge of thy will, and show us "the mark of the prize of our high calling." Let us die to all thou art not; and seek thee with our whole heart, till we enjoy the fulness of the purchased possession. Amen!

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

HINDRANCES.

MR. EDITOR,—I have had it in my heart for a while past, to send you another short communication for the Guide. It seems to me that too much cannot be said on the subject of experimental and practical holiness, by way of explaining its nature and enforcing its necessity; for this, of all subjects, is the most important to the Christian. O that it might receive attention corresponding to its importance; yet, alas! this is not the case: it is neglected by the greater part of professing Christians. Look where you will in the Christian Church, and how few can be seen that profess the blessing of holiness. Now is it not well worth our attention to ascertain, and if pos-

sible, remove the cause or causes of this state of things? To this then we call attention.

1. And in the first place, some do not believe in the doctrine of entire sanctification, as being attainable in the present life at least, before the moment of death, and hence consistently neglect to seek, and fail to find this pearl of great price. Is it not truly surprising that a person can thus believe, or rather disbelieve, when the Bible is so plain on the subject, especially the following passages? Deut. xxx. 6; Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, 26; Matt. v. 48; 1 Thess. v. 24; 1 John i. 7, 9; Rom. vi. 22. It is worthy of remark that the scriptures no where limit the attainment of this blessing to the article of death, but on the contrary, they speak of it as being attainable *now*.

2. Many have such erroneous views concerning its nature, and the way to obtain it, that they either never seek it, or seeking something else in its stead, fail of success; some place it much too high; indeed, I am inclined to think that a great many miss the blessing, by looking for too great things. It is true, sanctification is a great work, but then we are apt to exaggerate and magnify so as to make it above our reach. Now, in every enterprise, correct information is very necessary, in order to success, but in no one more so than in relation to holiness. Therefore, a person should seek for a right understanding of the subject, and the means to obtain it. In order to this, let him study the Bible and other books on the subject, and also consult some judicious friend, especially one who enjoys the blessing.

3. Others are prevented by the silence and indifference that may prevail on the subject where they live. They perhaps are awakened to see and feel its necessity, and would seek it, had they any one to encourage them; but it may be their preacher, or leader, or friends, do not say any thing on the subject, and hence they are discouraged, and tempted to reason thus—My teachers do not profess the blessing, and why should I? and if I should, others would say I professed more than I enjoyed. Is there not too much silence on this subject? Ought it not to be talked about in public, and to be made the matter of private conversation and personal inquiry? If this were done, how soon there would be an excitement on the subject, and many would experience the blessing who now live without it.

4. Some are discouraged about seeking, because they see so much sin and corruption in their own hearts—their besetments are so strong, and they are so frequently overcome by them, that they think they never can gain a complete victory.

To such we would say, your case is not so discouraging as you think; the conviction you feel of your utter helplessness, and the sight you have of remaining depravity, are the very means God is using to deliver you from all sin. He first gives you a sight of your-sake, and honor all men, as the image of God? Do I think no evil,

selves, that you may seek to be cleansed. Do not be discouraged, then, but cry mightily to God for deliverance.

5. Again, many seek in a wrong way. They either seek by faith alone or works alone, hence fail of success; we must not make works the condition of our sanctification—must not trust in what we have done or can do: to this we are very prone, and consequently become discouraged because we do not obtain.

Others seek by faith alone—they pray for humility, but as soon as they have done, they indulge in pride, or they pray to be kept from temptation, and then run right into it, or they groan and struggle for victory over their enemies, and yet neglect to watch against them, or they perhaps seek for sanctification, but still live in the neglect of a known duty or the indulgence of sinful pleasures. This is what destroys our hopes—here is the great secret of unanswered prayers and unsuccessful efforts. You must, then, properly balance faith and works; live for what you pray, and thus be consistent.

6. Once more: many fail of obtaining sanctification, because they do not persevere in seeking;—they have correct views—have commenced right, and are advancing towards the blessing, but they stop before they reach it. Doubtless thousands have not obtained, simply because they did not continue. Perhaps if they had sought a little longer or a little more earnest, God would have sanctified them. Do not be discouraged, then, though you may not obtain as soon as you desire—keep the blessing constantly in view—labor to feel its value—seek it steadily, consistently, perseveringly—lay hold upon it as a drowning man would upon any thing held out to save his life—hold on—never let go. God is willing, and able, and ready, to do the work. “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”

Dalton, Mass.

A—O—.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

DEAR BRETHREN,—I submit to you the following for an insertion in the Guide, if you judge it subservient to the cause of truth.

At the first appearance of the prospectus for the Guide, I rejoiced that such a work was in contemplation; and in its appearance, I have more than realized my expectations. It comes a welcome messenger, truly containing “a feast of fat things,” by which I am fed and strengthened; and being constrained by the love of Christ to declare

more extensively what he hath done for my soul, I will attempt so to do through this medium.

Fifteen years since, I embraced the religion of Christ ; sought, and I believe obtained, the pardon of my sins. I ran well for a season, but afterwards an *evil heart* brought me into difficulty. Evil propensities discovered themselves ; unholy desires gratified, brought me into bondage, and I had not power to stand against the inclinations of my natural heart. Though I often attempted, and strove to crucify the flesh, and was approved and blest of the Lord in so doing, yet I was not conqueror ; and in consequence of this, I was led often to doubt the reality of my adoption into Christ's family—to walk in darkness, and wander as sheep without a shepherd. O, happy had it been for me had I heard of a Deliverer—of Jesus as a *Saviour from all sin*. Happier still, if, when I did hear, which was the case a few years after, I had embraced him. But long I stumbled through unbelief. Though I was long sensible, and often deeply convinced, of the great necessity of an entire renovation of my nature, yet I seemed afraid to believe for the fulfilment of those promises which secure to us redemption from all iniquity, and deliverance from all our spiritual enemies. It would be impossible to enumerate the many obstacles which appeared to hinder my coming into this state ; yet I felt an increasing sense of the necessity of it, in order to glorify my heavenly Father, and to discharge the duties of my calling. During four years previous to the season of which I shall soon speak, this subject rested with more than usual weight upon my mind ; and several times I believe I was brought to the promised rest. I then needed a guide to show me the way. I was not fully aware that the Holy Spirit would lead me into all truth, if I earnestly sought its teachings ; and although it taught me, yet from the weakness of my faith I was slow to learn.

About three years ago I attended a camp meeting. Were it possible, I would describe the state of my mind at the meeting, and a short time previous to it ; but I cannot. Though I believed I was in favor with God, I loved his people and his truth, yet *self* was before the cross, duty was a burden, and O my leanness, my unlikeness to my Saviour, were the deep secret moanings of my heart. On my way to the encampment, and as I entered the tented grove, I felt an unusual ardent desire to be profited by the meeting, but a still clearer discovery of the desperate state of my heart greatly depressed my spirits. Apparently nothing was as it should be. Self-will and pride were holding sway, and *all*, ALL was impure, unholy, and wretched. And as I continued to view my state, my distress on account of it increased, until the evening of the second day, when my desires to be made clean were so intense, that in the agony of my soul I cried

unto the Lord, for this was my last resort—other expectations were cut off. I cried in my anguish and desperation—*Lord, purify this wretched heart just now.* I doubted not his power or willingness, and at that moment he answered my prayer. In the twinkling of an eye the great work was wrought; accompanied, too, with so clear an assurance, as rendered it impossible to doubt. O, the glorious change! But language cannot describe what I then realized. I felt the weight of the apostle's expressions, "*Joy unspeakable and full of glory.*" Never had I believed that my voice would be heard in shouts of praise on earth; but now it seemed impossible to suppress the emotions of gratitude which filled my soul; nor did I, in the least, desire to refrain from giving glory to him who had wrought so great a work within me; but rather I ardently desired to tell to all the wondrous story, that they, too, might join me in praising him. And O, the willingness I saw in my blessed Saviour to do the same for every believer! I could not be willing that one, either of our own persuasion or of another, should be satisfied till *pure in heart.*

I should delight to dwell long upon this memorable season, but for the inadequacy of language to describe its blessedness. Never had my poor heart conceived such a *complete victory* over spiritual enemies, such *entire deliverance* from inbred corruption, as I now realized. The contending elements of passion were instantly hushed, and there was a great calm; and although filled with glory, yet was perfectly tranquil as in a midnight slumber, so that I was led to exclaim, I know God hath done this; and should earth and hell combine to persuade me to doubt, I cannot, unless I doubt my existence. The change was far greater than I ever before experienced. My whole being seemed created anew. This is to me far the most interesting period in my life. I now began to live as I never did before, by faith on the Son of God. Praised be God that he led me by a way which I knew not, and hath proved himself to be an all-sufficient Saviour. Through his grace alone, and faith in his all-atoning blood, from that time until now, I have claimed him as my *present Saviour*; and although Satan aims at me many a fiery dart, and threatens hard my overthrow, yet knowing in whom I have believed, I still hang upon his gracious promises, and feel that through him I am more than conqueror. The ardent desire, which at that time was begotten within my breast, that all Christians should know and receive this truth as it is in Jesus, has never abated, but has led me to make efforts to convince them of their high and holy calling. Although weaker than a bruised reed, and claiming no strength of my own, yet constrained by the love of Christ which passeth all understanding, I will bear testimony that the blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth* from all unrighteousness; and I feel verily that he does enable me to *love him* with all my heart. My entire affections are centred in him, and in every act

I desire above all things to please him. The cross of Christ is now my delight, for by it I am crucified to the world and the world to me. Through Christ alone, I reckon myself dead indeed unto sin and alive to God. Glory be to God for this new and living way—for the way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. O, the wonderful scheme of redemption! God manifest in the flesh to destroy sin! Jesus himself a sacrifice for sin!! Believest thou this, O thou trembling, desponding soul? That he might redeem thee from *all* iniquity, and save thee from *all* thy *sins*, he hath shed his own blood. What more could he have done? Rely, then, upon his word. *Believe and be saved. Look and live.*

L. H. W.

Chickopee Falls, Jan., 1841.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

USEFULNESS OF THE GUIDE.

MR. EDITOR,—I believe the Guide is instrumental of doing much good, and hence I rejoice in its existence and circulation. I am happy to learn that the persons whom I have prevailed on to take it, are highly pleased with it, and seem to derive much profit from it. I will give you one instance. I recently received a communication from an intimate friend of mine—a pious sister in the Church—of which the following is an extract: * * * “But the hurry of business was soon over, and I resolved to give myself anew to God. But O, how shall I describe my feelings when I saw how short I had come of doing all my Master’s will. I hoped against hope, and believed, and ventured on him, and felt my soul restored,—that I was wholly the Lord’s: so I felt for a number of weeks, and when I testified of this, I seemed to have the impression that I believed because I would believe. While reading some of the bright experiences in the Guide, particularly C. Fitch’s, I saw my witness was not like his. I began praying for the witness, and I seemed in a measure to lose what I had. I found I must be thankful for what I had received, and look for more. Since then I have had many blessed seasons, and rejoiced in the mighty power of God. Our meeting in the morning, (Christmas morning,) was one of such power to my soul, that I think I will doubt no more. But I cannot keep myself a moment—I need every moment the merits of Christ’s death. O, the blessedness of living by faith on the atonement of Christ. I am frequently led to ask myself the question, how can such and such things be consistent with perfect love? I am not always happy. I do not always feel that lively exercise of faith in

prayer. I once seemed filled with his love, but now my business seems to call my mind off many times. But I will praise the Lord for what he has done and is still doing for my soul. *O, I cannot doubt but that my soul is cleansed from all sin*; and while I am writing, I feel the fire burning in my heart." Speaking of the Guide, she says, "I expect always to praise God in time and eternity, for the help the Guide has been to me. Glory to God that he ever raised up the Editor to bring such a work before the world;" and then in accordance with the warm feelings of her heart, and her desire that others should participate in the same benefits, adds, "My prayer to God is, that it may be carried as on the wings of the wind to the ends of the earth, till all flesh that is human may catch the sound—*salvation from all sin*." And now, Mr. Editor, this is not a solitary instance of the good done by the circulation of the Guide; hundreds of others have received special benefit from it. Why, then, should it not be extensively circulated? How few of our people know any thing about the Guide. I think I have sent you between twenty and thirty subscribers since its commencement, and I pledge myself to send you as many more if nothing unusual prevents.

Dalton, Mass.

A—O—.

We have many interesting facts, which we might state, showing the usefulness of this publication. We have, however, said but little on that subject, lest we should seem to boast. But as another hand has prepared an article we insert it; hoping it may interest others in behalf of the Guide.

EXTRACT.

LOVE TO CHRIST.—Love to Christ consists in a vast esteem of his worth, and boundless admiration of his infinite perfections, attended with sincere love to him, and fervent gratitude for his blessings. Love implies a spiritual understanding, or a conception of clear and just ideas of him; a sense of interest in his heart; and a forcible inclination of the will to him, considered as the supreme God. This will produce a lively emotion of the purest passions towards him as the supreme truth and beauty.

In Christ there is every possible excellence to feed the passion of love, and raise it to the utmost force and fire: God the Father determined in the constitution of the person of Christ, to furnish out an object that should infinitely exceed the warmest love of men and angels; an object that should exhaust and distance all created powers and affections; an object that should exceed all others, and be absolutely unrivalled and unparalleled to eternity. In the person of

Christ you see the lowest humility and infinite glory, the sweetest meekness and infinite majesty, the deepest reverence of God, and yet full equality with God in all divine perfections : you see in him patience under the worst of evils, and yet he was worthy of all possible good : an exceeding great spirit of the most humble obedience, and supreme dominion over all—perfect resignation to the divine will, and absolute sovereignty over heaven, earth and hell : extreme poverty and reliance on God for a crumb of bread, joined with all-sufficiency for ten thousand worlds.

In the actions of Christ, you see the most amazing humiliation and divine glory : love to God in the highest exertions, and at the same moment the utmost love to God's enemies. He appeared most zealous for God's justice, and yet suffered most awfully from justice : he displayed the most illustrious holiness ; and yet was treated as the most guilty man that ever lived in the world : he was dealt with as most unworthy, and yet was never more worthy than when he sweat blood in the garden, and died on the cross : he suffered most extremely from those very persons to whom he showed the greatest love : and when he was most of all in the power of his enemies, he then gained the most glorious victory over his enemies. This is the glorious person who is the supreme object of your love : and is he not worthy of your utmost esteem, your ardent desire, your strongest good will, and your most intense delight ? This is the great God-man who ought to be the end of all your studies, the end and matter of all your sermons, and the end of your life and existence for time and eternity.—*Ryland*.

O that with all thy saints I might
By sweet experience prove,
What is the length, and breadth, and height,
And depth of perfect love !

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

MAY, 1841.

NO. II.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

The following extract from a letter on experience is copied from a tract published in Boston in 1810, and is entitled, "The Life of Faith; A Letter found in the Study of the late Rev. Mr. Belcher of New England. Being an answer to the question, *How to live in this world, so as to live in heaven.*"

I will tell you familiarly what God hath done for my soul, and in what train my soul keeps toward himself. I am come to a conclusion to look after no great matters in the world; but to know Christ and him crucified. I make best way in a low gale. A high spirit and a high sail together will be dangerous, and therefore I prepare to live low. I desire not much, and pray against it. My study is my calling; so much as tends that way (without distraction) I am bound to plead for, and more I desire not. By my secluded retirements I have the advantage to observe how every day's occasions insensibly wear off the heart from God, and bury it in self, which they who live in care and cumbers cannot be sensible of. I have seemed to see a need of every thing God gives me, and want nothing that he denies me. There is no dispensation, though afflictive, but either in it, or after it, I find I could not be without it. Whether it be taken from me or not given to me, God quiets me in himself without it. I cast all my concerns on the Lord, and live securely on the care and wisdom of my heavenly Father. My ways, you know, are in a sense hedged up with thorns, and grow darker and darker daily; but yet I distrust not my good God in the least, and live more quietly in the absence of all by faith, than I should do, I am persuaded, if I possessed them. I think the Lord deals kindly with me, to make me believe for my mercies, before I ask them; they will then be Isaacs, *sons of laughter*. The less *reason* hath to work on, the more freely *faith* casts itself on the faithfulness of God. I find that while faith is steady, nothing can disquiet me; and when faith totters, noth-

ing can establish me. If I tumble out amongst means and creatures, I am presently lost, and can come to no end; but if I stay myself on God, and leave him to work in his own way and time, I am at rest, and can sit down and sleep in a promise, when a thousand rise up against me. Therefore, my way is not to be cast beforehand, but to walk with God by the day. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. I find so much to do continually with my calling and my heart, that I have no time to puzzle myself with peradventures and futurities. As for the state of the times, it is very gloomy and tempestuous. But why do the heathen rage? Faith lies at anchor in the midst of the waves, and believes the accomplishment of the promise through all these overturning confusions and seeming impossibilities.

Upon this God do I live, who is one God for ever, and will guide us unto death. Methinks I lie becalmed in his bosom, as Luther; in such a case I am not much concerned; let Christ see to it. I know prophecies are now dark, and the books are sealed, and men have all been deceived, and every cistern fails; yet God doth continue faithful, and faithful is he that hath promised, who will do it. I believe these dark times are the womb of a bright morning.

Many things more I might have said, but enough. O brother! keep close to God, and then a little of the creature will go a great way. Maintain secret communion with God, and you need fear nothing. Take time for duties in private, crowd not religion in a corner of the day. There is a Dutch proverb, "Nothing is got by thieving, nor lost by praying." Lay up all your good in God, so as to be able to overbalance the sweetness and bitterness of all creatures. Spend no time anxiously in forehand contrivances for *this* world,—they never succeed. God will turn his dispensations another way. Self contrivances are the effects of unbelief. I can speak by experience. Would men spend those hours they run out in plots and contrivances in communion with God, and leave all to him, by believing, they would have more peace and comfort. I leave you with your God and mine. The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Pray for your own soul, for the peace of Jerusalem, and earnestly for your poor brother.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERIOR OR HIDDEN LIFE.

NO. II.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS.

Having in the preceding number given some general idea of the Interior or Hidden Life, the very important inquiry arises: In what way shall we gain admission

we, by any mere voluntary acts, send them away. We admit, therefore, if gospel holiness necessarily implies physical perfection, that none can be holy. But this is not the case.

SECOND.—We remark, in the second place, that gospel holiness does not necessarily imply a perfection of the intellect, either in its perceptive or in its comparing and judging powers. The perfection of intellectual action depends in part on the perfection of physical action; on the perfection, for instance, of the organs of sense, the organs of the sight, hearing, and touch. But in our present fallen condition, it is well known that these and other physical instrumentalities, which have a greater or less connection with the mental action, are greatly disordered. And the natural and necessary consequence of this state of things will be a degree of perplexity and obscurity in such mental action. And such is the connection of the powers of the mind, one with another, that an erroneous action in one part of the mind will be likely to lay the foundation for a degree of erroneous action in some other part. Hence in the present life a perfect knowledge of things, either in themselves or in their relations, may be regarded in the light of a physical impossibility. And such perfect knowledge, in which there is not the least possible mistake or error, does not appear to be required of us in the scriptures, as a necessary condition of holiness and of acceptance with God.

THIRD.—In the third place, the holiness which, in accordance with the principles of the gospel, is required to be exercised in the present life, differs in some respects from the holiness or sanctification of a future life. Not, however, in its nature; but only in its accessories or incidents. In its nature, holiness ever will be, and ever must be the same; but it may differ in some of the attendant circumstances or incidents, under which it exists. It is supposed, for instance, that the exercise of the holiness of the future life, will not be interrupted by those various wearinesses and weaknesses which are our allotment here. This distinction is important and ought to be kept in mind. Otherwise, by contrasting the present with our anticipated future condition, and by dwelling upon the difference of the two states without considering the grounds of that difference, we may yield to discouragements which will be adverse to our best religious interests. But this is not the only ground of difference. In the present life we are subject to frequent and heavy temptations. The holy person is not exempted from them. On the contrary, he often endures those which are of the sharpest kind. But it is not so in the heavenly world. In that happier place the contest ceases for ever. There is not only no sin, but no temptation. While, therefore, we hold to the possibility of a freedom from actual voluntary transgression in this life, it ought to be understood that we do not hold to a freedom from temptation. So that we may speak of the continuance of the spiritual warfare in the present life, as a matter of necessity, but not of the continuance of sin as a matter of necessity.

We may also admit, in addition to what has been remarked, that all mere physical infirmities, which, independently of our own volition, prevent our doing for God what we should otherwise do; and also all unavoidable errors and imperfections of judgment, which in their ultimate causes result from sin, (we have reference here to Adam's sin,) require an atonement. It seems to be clear, that God constituted the human race on the principle of an unity, or rather of a close connection of obligations and interests; linking together man with man, as with bands of iron, in the various civil, social, and domestic relations. And in consequence of

the existence of the great connective laws of nature, (laws which our own judgments and consciences alike approve,) it seems to be the case, that we may sometimes justly suffer in our own persons, results which are of a primitive kind, although in their source flowing from the evil conduct of others rather than our own. Hence we may very properly, sincerely, and deeply mourn over our various infirmities and imperfections, although they are very different in their nature from deliberate and voluntary transgressions; and may with deep humility make application to the blood of Christ, as alone possessing that atoning efficacy, which can wash their stains away. In other words, although God is righteous in exacting from us whatever we could or might have rendered him if Adam had not fallen, and if the race had remained holy, nevertheless he has mercifully seen fit to remit or forgive all these involuntary sins, more commonly and perhaps more justly called trespasses or imperfections, if we will but cordially accept of the atonement in the blood of Christ. It is probably in reference to such imperfections or trespasses, that some good people speak of the moral certainty or necessity we are under of sinning all the time. If such is all their meaning, it is not necessary to dispute with them.

What, then, after these various remarks and explanations, is the nature of Christian perfection, or of that holiness, which, as fallen and as physically and intellectually imperfect creatures, we are imperatively required and expected to exercise; and to exercise not merely in the "article of death," but at the present moment and during every succeeding moment of our lives? It is on a question of this nature, that we if on any one which can possibly be proposed to the human understanding, that we must go to the Bible; and must humbly receive, irrespective of human suggestions and human opinions, the answer which the word of God gives. Happily for us, and happily for the world, this question is answered by the Saviour himself; and in such a way as to leave the subject clear and satisfactory to humble and candid minds. When the Saviour was asked, Which is the great commandment in the law, he answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," *Matt. xxii. 37-40.* And it is in accordance with the truth, involved in this remarkable passage, that the apostle asserts, (Rom. xiii. 10,) "*Love is the fulfilling of the law.*"

[illegible]

Holiness, as the term has now been explained, is required of all persons. We do not esteem it necessary to delay and to repeat all the passages, in which the requisition is made. It is written very plainly upon all parts of the Bible from the beginning to the end of it. "But as he, which hath called you, is holy," says the apostle Peter, "so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written,

be ye holy, for I am holy." All, therefore, which we have to say further at the present time is this: Those who aim at the possession of the Hidden Life, who wish to walk with God and to hold communion with him in the interior man as a friend converses with a friend, will find these glorious results impossible to them, except on the condition of HOLINESS OF HEART. So long as they indulge voluntarily in any known sin, they erect a wall of separation between themselves and their heavenly Father; and he cannot and will not take them into his bosom, and reveal to them the hidden secrets of his love. They must stand far off: not utterly rejected, it is true; but in sorrow as well as in sin; dark in themselves and dark to all around them. A. K.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

MY DEAR SIR,—Although not personally acquainted with you, I have, for some time past, been desirous of relating some of the exercises of my own mind, and if they should be thought by you of any advantage to the public—the means in any good degree of advancing the cause of our blessed Redeemer, or encouraging the hearts of any of his followers—you will confer a favor by giving the same an insertion in the Guide.

Having been blessed with pious parents, I was taught from my earliest childhood to regard the Bible as the word of God, written by "inspiration, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." And from that book, together with what I was taught by my parents, I early learned that I was a sinner against God; and in order to be saved and reconciled to him, I must have a new heart and a right spirit. For this end I often raised my desires in secret to Him who "seeth in secret," and prayed that he might reward me openly. And thus, for many years (not being "almost and altogether" persuaded to become a Christian, but preferring the enjoyment of this life and the pleasures of sin for a season,) I lived, alternately sinning and repenting, repenting and sinning. This kind of repentance I have since learned was not *true* repentance. It was not that which needeth not to be repented of. O, how can I but love and adore that Being who was so good, so kind, so merciful and long-suffering towards me, not willing that I should perish, but desirous that I should be brought into the knowledge and love of the truth. About a year since, where I reside, there seemed to be a general feeling upon the subject of religion, and I felt again called upon, as if it were the last time, to make a surrender of myself to God—to give up all for Christ. All my sins were arrayed before me. I then felt that I was in deed and in truth poor and needy,

wretched and undone. But thanks be to God, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, I was enabled to see that there was "help laid upon one that was mighty," and that there was one who was able and willing to save, even unto the uttermost. It was then I laid down my weapons of rebellion—then I gave my heart to the Saviour. And O, what peace, what joy in believing! For some time I was willing to leave this world and all who were near and dear to me here. Yea, I was more than willing; I longed to "depart and be with Christ," which I considered far better. I prayed, I gave thanks, I rejoiced and trusted in the Lord with my whole heart. It was then I could say, "I've given all for Christ, He's my all." But O, the sin of ingratitude, and the sin of unbelief! The former has slain its thousands, the latter its tens of thousands! From what I was told by all, I was led to *fear* that I should not, and that no one could always live in this state of mind. So the deacon believed, the pastor believed, and the church believed, and how could I doubt but what all said must be true. It proved true in my case. For the moment I began to doubt, I was in darkness—I lost my "first love." Not long after this, while conversing with a young lady of my acquaintance who had experienced a like change with myself, I was asked in an inquiring manner, if I thought it was the duty of Christians to pray to be freed from all sin. I replied at once—It is our indispensable duty—it should be the constant desire of our hearts. "Why is it? You do not believe we shall, or can be in this life, and how can it be our duty? Certainly we cannot ask in faith, and whatsoever is it not of faith is sin," was her reply. These few words, spoken as I suppose they were, with great sincerity of heart, bore with much weight upon my mind. And from that time I was led to make diligent search in the scriptures of divine truth, determined if possible, to know the will of the Lord, and to see what provisions were made in the gospel for our redemption and deliverance from the effects, the power and dominion of sin. Although I had heard but little in regard to the doctrine of holiness, yet I must say I was somewhat prejudiced against it. But when I came with an honest and sincere heart, desirous to know the truth—what was actually taught in the Bible—how different it appeared. It was to me a new book. I there learned that God required "truth in the inward parts"—that he was satisfied with nothing short of the whole heart—that it was his will I should be holy even as he is holy, and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." From this time I began to be more and more desirous of making an *unreserved* surrender of myself to God, for time and for eternity. But often would I find on examination, that my observance of the Sabbath, attendance on public worship, secret prayers and devotions, were almost if not altogether from selfish motives. They were observed and performed that I might myself receive a

blessing, and eventually be brought into the kingdom. I found, too, that I was not fully reconciled to the will of God—not praying as Christ had taught, viz. “*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,*” but was setting up my will in opposition to the will of God. The more I learned of the sinfulness and depravity of my own heart, the more frequent and fervent were my prayers that the Lord would “forgive my sins, and cleanse me from all unrighteousness.” It was now, in preference to all things else, my prayer in the morning, my desire in the evening, that the Lord would “search me and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” It was a source of much grief to find within me a selfish disposition—a sinful heart of unbelief, not wholly in subjection to the will of God. From day to day my prayer was, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Thus I prayed for months, and desired the blessing which I was satisfied God alone could bestow, until, about two months since, after returning from a social meeting in the evening, I took the Bible and read with uncommon interest, believing it to be in truth what God had said, and what he still says by his Holy Spirit. “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved, and thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” My heart with raptures replied, “Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief.” I heard, as if it were the still small voice, saying, “My grace is sufficient for thee—I am thine and thou art mine—there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus—they are freely forgiven all trespasses—they are justified from all things—their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” These, I replied, are the immutable words of truth. They cannot be broken. O, my soul, trust thou in them. Believe without doubt or wavering—withdraw not thy confidence. I will trust and not be afraid. I do believe all that the Lord hath spoken. He will do all that he hath promised. “The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation. In him will I put my trust.” Here I found peace and consolation to my soul which I had never before enjoyed—a peace which indeed “passeth all understanding.” I now became satisfied that the Father was perfectly reconciled, not for any works of righteousness which I had done, but through the life and death of his Son, giving me as a free gift, the benefits of his life and death, and putting me into possession by believing. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise him for the exceeding riches of his love. What a mercy it is that he has brought me into this way of peace! O Lord, may I ever believe, may I ever trust in the merits of thy Son—take encouragement from thy blessed word. Mind what consolation it gives: “Having therefore, brethren, bold-

ness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by that new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say his flesh, and having an high-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." What perfect peace is here proclaimed to the children of God! Having been separated from Him by sin, but now having access through his Son. This is indeed a "new and living way," in opposition to the old way of works. All that are alive to God live by faith of the Son of God. I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that being justified by faith I have found peace, and free access to a reconciled God. We are agreed, and now I desire to walk with him. He is my Father, and has towards me, as his offspring, the most tender affection. I ought not, it would be base in me to question it, since he has shed his love abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, who has made me of one mind and of one heart with himself. These are the fruits of the Father's covenant, grace, and everlasting favor. O what exceeding riches of love are these! If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. And now, what more shall I say? I feel an abiding peace and consolation, a nearness to my Saviour which I never felt before. At times, it is true, I am tried but not forsaken; and, as if it were, cast down but not destroyed. My Saviour is ever round about me—a very present help in time of trouble. It is my desire to "give to the Father praise, and glory to his Son;" for I know that I have been blessed, greatly, wonderfully blessed, by him. And to his honor, to the praise of his great and adorable name would I say it. I am satisfied that I have been kept, and must still continue to be kept by grace through faith, "and that not of myself, it is the gift of God." And what more can I ask? O my Father, thou hast said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I trust, I believe thy word—all that thou hast said. I trust in thee and thee alone. Forbid that I should ever trust in any being or power except thine own self, for thou art my strength and my Redeemer.

R.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

1st. When Christians enjoy this glorious work in their souls, they are saved from all prejudice against any of the followers of Christ,

however ignorant and weak. They obey the instruction of the apostle—"The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It is not against those only who accord with themselves in their views of men and things, that they feel no prejudice, but those who may peradventure think differently upon many subjects from themselves. They are saved in the present tense; and in vain may Christians talk of being sanctified entirely, while they feel the workings of this evil principle within them.

2d. They are saved from that hasty spirit which often precedes a fall. They put not out to sea without a quadrant, chart and compass. Their eye is often on the word of God: it occupies a conspicuous place. As the devil comes sometimes as an angel of light, they are not hasty to take the word of man as a guide in duty, but consult the word of God; and inquire often of the Lord in secret, what he would have them do. Christians once lived so near to God, that they did not presume to commence any worldly enterprise without prayer; and the time was when members of the M. E. Church were distinguished from others, as they entered the house of God, Sabbath mornings, by spending a few moments on their knees in secret prayer to God for a preparation for the services of the sanctuary, &c. Now, too many are employed in gazing at the congregation, as they enter the house, or they give their attention to the choir, or spend the time in reading newspapers, or in chat with their friends. Devoted Christians are not pleased with every new fashion and custom brought about by the prince of darkness to win souls. O when will the Christian church return to primitive simplicity in public worship.

3d. They are like Christ in as much as "when they are reviled they revile not again; when they suffer, they threaten not; but commit themselves unto him who judgeth righteously." No one can retain the favor of God, much less enjoy the blessing of holiness, while he renders evil for evil. Did the Saviour ever injure those who sought to injure him? Did he ever use physical force or command the angels to assist him in taking vengeance on his enemies? No. Neither will he who is Christ-like ever wish to take vengeance on his enemies. "Vengeance is mine—I will repay, saith the Lord." The standard is, (and it is not merely theoretical but practical,) "Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. v. 45, 46. If we are God-like, we shall follow his example here brought to view.

4th. They are saved from that fretfulness, peevishness and talkativeness, which characterize too many professors of religion in the visible church. Conversion puts an end to the *appearance* of such a

disposition, though it may not utterly *destroy* it in the heart. A perfect cure is wrought when the soul is sanctified. It sweeps it from the heart.

"It lays the paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven."

The soul in this state does not lose a sense of the presence of God. It may forget many things, but it will not forget that God's eye is upon it by night and by day; for there is such a constant effort to do all things to his glory, as would not well accord with such an idea. Indeed, how can persons who constantly believe and realize that "for every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment," speak at random or chat nonsense on any occasion whatever? Their conversation is in heaven, from whence they are continually looking for the Saviour. Their words with mortals are few, and seasoned with grace. They remember the old saying: "He that talks much, must talk in vain." When a child, it was reported to me that Methodists would not converse about worldly things; of which I then thought very strange, but now I see nothing strange in it at all. Would to God there were more such Christians now.

5th. They are saved from slothfulness and inactivity. They never complain, like many, that there are no openings to do good. If they had a thousand times more ability than they now have, they would never be idle through a lack of opportunity. Shall we say there are no openings, while there are so many in the church but just able to breathe the breath of spiritual life? No openings, while thousands of backsliders are standing in the way of perishing sinners? No openings, while our friends and neighbors are making their own damnations sure? "But," says one, "if I attempt to converse with my family and friends about their souls, I shall hear in reply, 'Physician, heal thyself.'" Now suppose you do? If there is any fault in your Christian character, would you not be glad to know it? Let them point it out; and when you see it, *confess* it before them, and it will break the way to get from them a confession, if your pride does not hurry you away from their presence. Entreat of them to covenant with you to seek the Lord in newness of life. Many professors of religion are so afraid of frightening away some of the flock, that they neglect the important work of reproving and rebuking one another with long suffering, &c. Others are ready to excuse themselves from doing their duty to others by saying, "They will be offended." And shall we place a greater value upon their friendship than upon their *never dying souls*? The work of saving souls is not one in which there are no difficulties. Devoted Christians not only see openings all around them, but they have a "*mind to work*;" and when

this mind is in the church, the walls will be built, not of substances which will be removed by the first blast of hell, but with that which will endure unto life eternal.

6th. They enjoy a union with one another peculiar to themselves and unknown to others. The Saviour's prayer is heard in their behalf in a very peculiar sense, recorded in St. John, xvii. 20, 23: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be *one*," &c. "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made *perfect in one*," &c. It matters not in what church book their names are recorded; it matters not what their peculiar views are, respecting many things of a disputable nature in God's word, or whether they are all just so far advanced in intellectual culture. They feel that there is truly "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Their views of Christ, their deadness to sin and the world, their griefs and sorrows, hopes and joys, are similar. Nothing but a loss of the blessing of holiness can disunite such. The devil with his polished advocates of sin, strives in vain; the world may stigmatize them, the church visible may excommunicate, ministers may denounce them as pharisaical, and hold them up to the gaze of others, as dangerous to the church and community, but they cannot be severed while they dwell in God. The grand business of such is to spread scripture holiness over the land. When this great work is wrought in the soul, all the elements of strife and division are burnt up. Charity is put on and becomes the "bond of perfectness." Dr. A. Clarke says upon these words of the apostle, "And that very love which is the fulfilling of the law and the *perfection* itself, which the gospel requires, is also the *bond* of that *perfection*." (Col. iii. 14.) My cry to Jesus is,

"Regard thine own eternal prayer,
And send a peaceful answer down;
To us thy Father's name declare,
Unite and perfect us in one."

S. Wellfleet, April, 1841.

NATHAN RICE.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

FIDELITY.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST,—I have read each number of the *Guide*, from its commencement; and in the perusal of its rich and holy contents, have been from month to month especially edified,

comforted and blessed. I have just perused the March number, and it has been to me a spiritual feast—like “cold waters to a thirsty soul.” There is nothing but the Bible that I peruse with so great a degree of satisfaction and edification. I have often thought of writing something for its columns; but, supposing myself incapable of contributing any thing in this way, which would aid in promoting and advancing this blessed cause—the spread of *scriptural holiness*—I have hitherto concluded to be silent. But feeling desirous to contribute a mite, if possible, for this glorious and godlike enterprise, through this medium, I send you this communication, which, if in your judgment, you think it will do good, and will not exclude more useful and important matter, you will please give an insertion.

As it respects personal experience and enjoyment of this great blessing, I cannot speak with all that boldness and confidence at the present time, which some of your correspondents express; yet, I think I have known and still know something of its blessedness. Yes, glory be to God! I feel that Jesus is mine and I am his. It is that theme on which my happy soul has, for years, most delighted to dwell. I can truly and most sincerely adopt the language of “a sinner saved by grace,” and say, “nothing so enraptures my soul as preaching, praying, and talking about holiness. O blessed subject! It is the *marrow* of the Bible—the *essence* of the gospel—the *bone* and *sinew* of Christ’s church.” I feel a consciousness that I should enjoy it more fully and constantly, if I preached, prayed, and talked more about it, which, by the grace of God, I feel resolved to do. I am fully sensible, from my own experience and observation upon this subject, that if I, and others who have experienced this blessing, had, when we believed with our hearts “unto righteousness,” and reckoned ourselves “to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,” made and continued to make, at all proper times, and on all suitable occasions, “confession with the mouth unto salvation,” that “the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed us from all sin,” declaring, that “by grace through faith, we are saved,” we should have been more abundantly “filled with the spirit,” and “with all the fulness of God” ourselves, and been instrumental of doing much more good to others. This is my opinion, at least with regard to myself. If others coincide with me in this opinion, respecting themselves, let us “confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed.” Let us buckle on the whole Christian armor, that we may “endure hardness as good soldiers, fight manfully the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life,” and gain the “victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “All scripture is given by inspiration of God,” for this intent: “that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” Let us “therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmoveable, al-

ways abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Holiness unto the Lord" should be the motto of every one who names the name of Christ. This "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" the mighty influence which is going, and will continue to go forth, "conquering and to conquer," until "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Fountains of this living water are breaking forth in different directions, from whence are issuing fertilizing and purifying streams of salvation, to "make glad the city of God." These streams, combining their mighty influence, will form that river, I trust, with which "the Spirit of the Lord" will sweep away the enemy, though he has "come in like a flood." Let the church militant come up unitedly "to the help of the Lord against the mighty," in the "beauty of holiness;" let all brethren in the Lord "dwell together in unity," loving God with all their hearts, and "one another with pure hearts fervently, doing unto others as we would have others do unto us;" then would "the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth;" then would the promise be verified unto her: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." I rejoice that such efforts are made at this time, through the medium of the press, as well as the pulpit and otherwise, for the dissemination of light and knowledge upon this subject. May they be continued and abundantly increased, until "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Go on, dear brethren, in your great and good work. I can, and do, most sincerely, wish you "God speed." May you *guide* many in the highway of *holiness*; and may we all "return" therein, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads; where all "obtain joy and gladness, where sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" to join in the general anthem, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

O. W.

East Abington, Mass., March 12, 1841.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

"IT IS A NARROW WAY."

Before I had entered the way of perfect love, and while seeking to find it, these solemn words, *IT IS A NARROW WAY*, were deeply impressed upon my mind. My heart had then, for months, been set to

learn the peculiarities of that way in which Christ walks with his sanctified ones. From the time, however, in which these words particularly arrested my attention, the *narrowness* of the path became more than ever, a subject of close and habitual thought with me. It was a subject which sank deep into my heart. I took it for an every day lesson. No lesson have I ever had of so great value to me. No one have I had so extensive in its meaning ;—having so important connection with all that ought to interest the human mind. And I am never happier, than when speaking of the benefit of this study ; pointing out the peculiar advantages of it.

It enables me, among other things, to remember the *wisdom* of Him who appointed it : for, while looking at its narrowness, I see its design ; and the harmony, and fitness of every thing to be found in it ; a combination of things, pure and lovely, of which no finite mind could conceive the plan. And not less does it show me that he is gloriously *holy* in his wisdom. There is no ray emanating from him in which both wisdom and holiness are not blended.

It teaches me, also, (and this is a very important lesson,) my own nothingness : for how could I walk in so straight, so narrow a path ? I am altogether unable to do it, except by constantly renouncing myself, and claiming a mighty Saviour, who has given himself for my supporter and leader. To be in this high way every hour, and every moment, I must have it the habit of my soul to exhale, as it were, all reliance upon self, and to inhale the divine keeping. By this I am enabled, too, to perceive what the church and the world justifiably expect of me, professing as I do, to have the Holy One the sole possessor of my heart. At every point of my lesson, directed as it is to the knowledge of the narrow way, I see more and more clearly, my responsibilities in having a holy profession upon me. It causes me to cry out from the depth of my soul, O to be led ! O to be kept !

Added to other things which have led me to think and speak much of the carefulness with which we must step in this way,—the case of those who have once entered this path, professed to be walking in it, and then departed from it ; or, having become inconstant, sometimes speak of their faith and love, and then of their unbelief and fear—the case of such has most impressively said to me, let him that is in the way, take heed lest he step out ; for it is not a difficult thing to fall, though we may now be walking firmly. The influence which such apostasies or changes have, is truly chilling and blighting. This is often, yea, sadly often, illustrated to us.

While in a distant village, for a time, I heard it often said, and with candor, “such a once has once been sanctified, or, has once professed to be, but now is like others. What can this mean ?” How much ought we to dwell upon this, remembering that it does not affect *ourselves* merely, when we recede from the point once

gained by us ! There are consequences (seen as well as unseen) connected with retrograde steps, which ought to make our very hearts to quake. Looking at this holy path again and again, and seeing how much is to be learnt by the contemplation of it, I am ready to exclaim, more and more heartily, Evermore let me remain in the school of Christ.

A STUDENT.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SACRED MEDITATIONS.

"Thy law is in my heart."

Thy law, thy law of love, O thou Eternal One, may it again be written on man's heart, to be the spring of action, the life of his existence ? May his sinful, grovelling affections be lifted up and fastened on thee, O thou blessed God ? Yes, this is the new covenant of thy mercy, *to write thy law in the heart*. By thy own living Spirit to engrave it there, in characters as real as thy own existence ; for thy law of love is a transcript of thyself, a part of thine own nature. When thy law is in the heart, there is thy love, there art thou thyself, a living, breathing spirit. O it is blessed to give up the heart to God. He does not leave it a blank : he does not leave it a sink of pollution. No, he shines into it, by his own most blessed, purifying light, and causes it to send forth heart-felt streams of joy and gladness, of purity and beauty. He penetrates its depths, and searches out its evil windings, and breathes health and vigor to its very source. Who would not give up his heart to God, and have the law of love, the law of heaven, enshrined in his inmost soul ? Who, ah who, what wretched one is there, who will not fasten his eye on the *new covenant of mercy*, and there fix it, until he realizes his own heart to be a heart of love ? *Love!* Truly all else is as sounding brass, an empty sound compared with love. Love fills up the measure of the heart, it leaves no aching void. Its object *always is, and always is to be*, the GREAT I AM, the proofs and pledges of whose love are never wanting. The law of love is the life of the believer's soul, the element in which he lives. The one emotion which alone he covets, and which often fills his soul to overflowing, and leaves no room for other emotions to dwell. O love, what art thou in *real life, in action* ? It is love that suffers long from ill usage and contempt, and *still is kind*. It seeth another of higher gifts and graces, but it envieth not. It is lowly in itself ; it seeketh not itself, it seeketh the good of others. O love, I see thee all drawn out in the life of Jesus,

and I know what thou art. Thou hast an eye always turned upward, to catch the motions of *His eye*, thy God, thy Father. Thou hast chosen His will, whatever blasts may come upon thee. Thy example, O Jesus, teaches us what love is, and thy precepts teach us, I will follow thy example ; I will keep thy precepts, for therein do I delight, and thus shall I ever abide in thy love and find thy law written on my heart.

“ Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.”

It is but the reflection of God we see on earth, the shadow of his glory. What will it be to see him face to face ? I have seen the sun go down in calm, majestic beauty, and the reflection of his rays extending far around the horizon, and I have thought of God, whose presence lights up heaven, and whose reflected glory beams all around from the company of the blest. What will it be to see God ? To behold him, whose countenance is as lightning, and whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and all this effulgence beaming love ? To see him, who measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, and who taketh up the isles as a very little thing ? And to behold in this great God, a Saviour, a friend, a friend *for ever* ? To see his arms extended, and to hear him say, “ Well done, good and faithful servant ; come ye blessed of my father.” What will it be to tread with Jesus, our elder brother, the ceaseless round of eternity ? To see him clothed and fashioned like ourselves, to be joint heirs with him, and to be entered on this inheritance ; to receive the full fruition of this blessedness ? What will it be to strike our golden harps in the pure atmosphere of heaven ? Hark ! what vibrations ! I seem to catch the sound and—*to be there*.

O, Jesus, it is but a glimpse of thee, we have on earth, and we know our shattered bark can bear but little of thy glory. We cannot see thy face and live. We will be content to serve thee, with but partial views of thee, only be thou our strength. Let us feel that thou art with us, and in us, and art round about us, and we will be content. Although to die is gain, yet to live is Christ. O, it is blessed to live on earth, and *have a Saviour*. To be a weary wanderer no more, but to come home to our Father’s house, and rest on the bosom of Jesus, with no desire for aught else but him. While I live I will praise thee, O Jesus, Redeemer of my soul ; and when I escape, as a bird let loose, I will praise thee with an angel’s tongue.

Except ye be converted and become as little children.

See the little child, how weak, how helpless, how dependent, and see thyself, O humble believer. Stript of all thy riches, thy earth-born possessions, thou hast come to Christ, wretched and poor, and blind and naked. Self-destroyed, thou knowest that in him alone thy

help is found. As the little child turns to its mother for the supply of all its wants, thus dost thou turn to Christ. With what confiding simplicity it rests its little head upon its mother's arm, and how happy are those arms to embrace so beloved, so helpless an object. And yet the mother may forget her child, *but I will never forget thee*, saith our God. How much more safe then art thou, O believer, with his arms underneath thee. His everlasting arms will uphold thee, when stript of all self-will and self-dependence, thou dost look to him alone for help. It is such *little ones*, such self-abased, such humble ones, that the Lord carries in his arms, and folds in his bosom. It is over such our Lord rejoiced in spirit when on earth, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and *revealed them unto babes*. Where, O my soul; where, O my Saviour, is the lowest place? O let me find it, for there my Lord will meet me, and open to me the treasures of his love. Is it not where myself is crucified, where I live not, where pride and self-will are extinguished? O the ground of my own nothingness, is not this where Jesus wants me, and fills me with himself, and *liveth in me*? O let me be a little one, self-crucified, self-annihilated, for then Jehovah is my defence, he will keep me. It is not the will of our Father who is in heaven, that one of these *little ones* should perish. Their angels in heaven do always behold the face of my Father; they wait to come with messages of mercy, as their necessities demand. O ye spirits of the blessed, may ye ever find me childlike and waiting on my Father's will.

P. L. U.

From the Oberlin Evangelist.

We sometimes find letters, which, as they were written with no design to have them published, speak out very fully the feelings of the heart. The following is such a letter. The subject is one of great interest; but the letter needs to be read with attention, to be appreciated.

LETTER FROM A CLERGYMAN TO HIS WIFE.

—, Dec. 5th, 1840.

MY DEAR COMPANION,—I received your letter with gratitude to the giver of all good. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may find that permanent rest in Christ, of which you spoke, to which it is our privilege, as well as our duty to attain. The other morning I awoke with the following sweet words in my mind: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of

thy mourning shall be ended." The verse preceding, contains the following promises, inexpressibly sweet: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." The thought contained in these sweet verses seems to be this: Our blessedness is no longer to be depended upon, or to be derived from visible temporal objects. If then we are to be rendered for ever independent, our blessedness is to be drawn directly from God himself, and is to be as permanent as the source from which it emanates. Our "sun is no more to go down, neither shall our moon withdraw itself." God is to be "our everlasting light." In this state of pure, permanent, and everlasting blessedness, the days of our mourning are to cease for ever. Let us not for a moment believe that this is too much for us to expect from God. He certainly is able to lift us for ever above the distracting influence of "things seen and temporal;" and if He himself, as He has promised to be, becomes our "everlasting light," what finite object can reach us so as to disturb our peace? Let the eye of our faith be fixed directly upon Him who is our sun, our "shield, and our exceeding great reward." Let us believe that He is, and will be to us an "everlasting light," and that in Him, the "days of our mourning" shall for ever terminate. Then if our Saviour "bids us come to him on the water," we will go to him; and when the storm and tempest beat around us, we will not doubt nor fear, for we shall rejoice in the assurance that the foundation beneath our feet is as firm as the eternal rock upon which his are planted. When the mountain wave seems about to roll over us, we will walk up it, and when standing upon its summit, the "everlasting light" around us shall shine with increasing brightness. If He "calls us to the furnace of affliction," we will peaceably walk through the flames, knowing, that while He is with us, the "smell of fire" shall not be found upon our garments. When He rolls a great burden of cares upon us, we shall find that in the "Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength," and that his grace and strength shall sweeten all our cares and render every burden light. "Because we have set our love upon Him, therefore will He deliver us: He will set us on high, because we have known his name. We shall call upon Him, and He will answer us: He will be with us in trouble: He will deliver us and honor us." "With long life will he satisfy us, and show us his salvation." "We shall not be afraid for terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day." Let us believe in God; and we shall find that even all this is possible; yes, we shall find it a blessed reality in our own experience. Let us not "stagger at the promises of God through unbelief," but let us be "strong in faith, giving glory to God;" "being fully persuaded, that what He has promised, He is able also to perform." "Blessed is she that be-

lieves, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."

That we should thus believe and enter into the rest provided for us, is a duty which we owe to our Redeemer, to the church, to the world, and in a very special sense to our children, upon whose immortal spirits, unto us it is given to impress the image of Christ. To the children of most professors of religion, the gospel does not appear lovely and attractive, because it wears a repulsive aspect in the example of their parents. But when the gospel shall be seen by our children, to have sweetened our tempers, corrected our habits, subdued our appetites and carnal propensities, lightened all our cares and changed our whole moral being into the likeness of Christ; when it shall be seen by them, to have lifted us above the world and planted our feet upon those everlasting hills, where our "sun does not go down, neither does our moon withdraw itself, where the Lord is an everlasting light, and the days of our mourning are ended," will they not be sweetly drawn to seek an interest in that love by which our powers are held in such blissful fixedness to one changeless centre? What may we not hope from our children when they shall be subjected to such an influence as this?

Then also will heaven have its appropriate attractions to our children, and they will know something of what heaven is. What is heaven, but an eternal association with all the pure and holy in the universe, with God for the everlasting light of the soul? When they shall see in our experience the value of a foretaste of such blessedness, then may we hope that their hearts also will be drawn thither. Now, to the children of most professors of religion, the chief attraction of heaven seems to be derived from their conceptions of its mansions, golden streets, exhaustless natural wealth, and visible scenery. The reason of this, as it appears to me, is, that while such parents talk of heaven, their hearts are manifestly given to visible temporal objects. The almost necessary result is, that in the minds of their children is "created the conception" of a material visible heaven, with very faint conceptions of its spirituality. Let it not be so with our children. Let them gain from us such conceptions of it, that the hope of attaining it in them will lead them to "purify themselves, even as He is pure."

I had no idea of writing so much upon this theme, when I commenced; but "from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And now, my dear wife, let us so "abide in Him," that *here* we may "comprehend the breadth, and depth, and length, and height, and know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," and that we may not be ashamed before Him at this coming.

YOUR HUSBAND.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

The following letter has been furnished us by a friend; and though not written for publication, will be found very interesting.

DEAR SISTER,—You have long since requested of me an account of the deepening of the work of grace in my soul. I will attempt it; and may the Spirit help my infirmities.

When I entered the M. E. Church, I was unacquainted with the doctrine of sanctification; and when I heard the objection brought against the Methodists, that they believed a person could live without sin, I questioned its correctness. But on being told of one who said she lived without sin, I admitted she might be *sincere*, but supposed her *mistaken*. The preacher in charge where I then was, did not receive the doctrine as taught by Wesley. The members of the church who enjoyed it, did not deem it advisable to speak of it, except at band-meetings, and of the existence of these I knew not; so I remained in a state of comparative ignorance for two years, when I was strongly convicted, by the clear testimony of one who was justified about the same time as myself, that "God had sanctified his soul." I believed this must be my privilege also, and set myself about seeking it. I read; I fasted; I prayed much and earnestly, for weeks: but having no access to works on the subject, having no personal acquaintance with any who had attained it, hearing nothing said about it, and looking abroad over the church and beholding a great mass of her ministry and members living without it, I concluded I also might live without it, and gave up the pursuit. In the fall of 1833, I had purposed attending camp meeting; but being in poor health, and suffering under some trials of a peculiarly painful character, I concluded not to go—when, one day, this scripture was powerfully presented: "Why is there a price put into the hands of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?" And as there were no outward obstacles to prevent my going, I reflected that there I might receive the grace and strength I needed to sustain and direct me, and therefore went. I possessed at that time a clear evidence of acceptance; yet during the whole progress of the meeting, I felt an inward cry for a great blessing, though I did not then rest my mind on being sanctified. On Saturday morning, finding the meeting drawing near its close, and I had not been specially blest, I felt the importance of redeeming the time that remained, and began really to feel my need, and set myself, with the Spirit's aid, to seek a present blessing—a something which would enable me so to live as to glorify God and feel safe in view of death. I felt there was a great deal in my heart I must be saved from *now*, if I hoped to be saved in heaven; and I besought God in earnest to answer my heart's desire. I hungered and thirsted; my soul was fixed; light increased; my heart

must be cleansed from all sin. I kept my petition on the altar ; I endeavored to lay self and all there ; I acted in faith ; I never once anticipated a refusal ; I expected to be heard and answered. But O, the conflicts of that season ! the floods of temptation which assailed me ! It seemed as though, when the Spirit of God had thoroughly searched my heart, I had given up one thing after another, till it was entirely emptied. Then came the enemy, and presented every possible duty, trial, cross, and some the most unlikely, if I persisted in seeking that for which I had asked. But blessed be God, he found nothing in my heart to answer to his temptation. My prayer was, any thing Lord, only with it, thy grace. All burden of sin was gone, yet my whole soul was as intensely fixed as ever, looking up every moment for an answer to prayer. I asked for no sign from heaven ; I marked out no way in which for God to answer ; and when I first felt the divine communication, it seemed to be spoken to me, " This is the power of God ; are you willing to be made a public spectacle ? " The answer of my heart was, Any way, Lord. I then received the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. It pervaded every part of my frame, and seemed literally as a burning fire rolling up through my heart—a glory above the brightness of the sun enshrouded me ; I sunk, overwhelmed with the presence of the Highest, and for the first time in my life, shouts of glory burst from my full soul, while I wept with excess of feeling. I no more dared to doubt then, nor have I since, that God at that moment cleansed me from sin, than of my own existence, though it forms not the basis of present hope, that is founded on a present indwelling Saviour. To him be all the glory.

Thus I have given you, as briefly as possible, the circumstances attending the hour when God spake to my heart—" *Be clean.*" You know something of my peculiar situation at that time, which seemed to enhance the difficulty of living it ; but through the goodness of God I continue to this day, and through his grace I am what I am. The language of my heart is, and ever must be, " O to grace how great a debtor." I remain yours in a Saviour's love.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

THE PERFECT CHRISTIAN.

But the heart of every Christian may also be filled with love—love to God and love to man. No duty in the Bible is more strictly enjoined upon Christians than this. " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments." (Deut. xi. 1.) " I have set before you this day life and good, death

and evil ; in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God." (Deut. xxx. 15, 16.) "Take diligent heed to love the Lord your God." (Josh. xxii. 5.) "O love the Lord all ye his saints." (Ps. xxxi. 23.) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, (Mark xii. 30 ; and Luke x. 27,) and with all thy mind." (Matt. xxii. 37.) In the last passage, the extent of our love to God is clearly marked. *With all thy heart.* The whole heart is filled with love to God. There is nothing in the heart but what relates to God, and is regulated by him. *With all thy soul.* That is, with all *the life*. The whole life is given to God, and is employed, with all its comforts and blessings, to glorify him. *With all thy strength.* All the faculties, powers, time, talents, and influences, are to be consecrated to the service of God. *With all thy mind.* With all the *intellect*. Every intellectual faculty is employed for God. Every thing is banished from the mind which does not contribute to the glory of God and the salvation of man. God is in, all the thoughts. He is "all and in all." Life is nothing but as it comes from and leads to God. Such is the Christian who loves God with all the *heart, soul, strength, and mind*. He "beholds as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image from glory to glory."

Exhortations are frequently given to love God. "O love the Lord all ye saints." (Ps. xxxi. 20.) "Putting on the breast-plate [of faith and love." (1 Thess. v. 8.) "O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, and love." (1 Tim. vi. 11.) "Keep yourselves in the love of God." (Jude 21.) Prayers are frequently offered for such : "Let them that love Him be as the sun, when he goeth forth in his strength." (Judg. v. 31.) "Let them that love thy name be joyful in thee." (Ps. v. 11.) "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. vi. 24.) Let the following prayer be particularly marked : "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph. iii. 14—17. "That ye might be filled," &c. Among all the great sayings in this prayer, this is the greatest : "By the *fullness of God*, we are to understand all those gifts and graces which he has promised to bestow on man, and which he dispenses to the church. To be *filled with all the fullness of God*, is to have the whole soul filled with meekness, gentleness, goodness, love, justice, holiness, mercy and truth.

And, as what God *fills*, neither sin nor Satan can fill, consequently, it implies that the soul shall be emptied of sin : that sin shall neither have dominion *over* it, nor being *in* it."*

This duty and privilege is also set forth in the great and precious promises made to such as love God. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God ; shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." (Exod. xx. 5, 6.) "The Lord preserveth them that love him." (Ps. cxiv. 20.) "All things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. viii. 28.) "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.) "A kingdom God hath promised to them that love him." (James ii. 5.) We also learn, from the following passages, how this love is produced in the heart : "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 6.) "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God." (1 Thess. iii. 5.) "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (Rom. v. 5.) *Shed abroad.* That is, it fills, quickens, and invigorates all the powers and faculties of the soul. It consumes what is impure, and assimilates every passion and appetite into itself.

O blessed state ! The soul freed from all sin and filled with love to God and man. Fellow Christian, this is your privilege. You may be saved from sin, and filled with love, if there be any truth in the Bible. Can you doubt it, after examining carefully and prayerfully the above passages ? O rest not, till you feel that "perfect love which casteth out all fear !" "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." R. W. A.

Eastford, Conn., March, 1841.

* See Dr. Clark on Eph. iii. 14—17.

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

VOL. II.

JUNE, 1841.

NO. 12.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERIOR OR HIDDEN LIFE.

NO. III.

SOME DIRECTIONS TO AID IN THE ATTAINMENT OF HOLINESS.

The question arises here, how may we attain to Holiness? How may we experience the glorious change from partial to a state of entire sanctification? There are three things, upon which, in connection with the operations and influences of the Holy Spirit, this great result seems especially to depend.

FIRST.—And the first is a belief in the attainableness of holiness at the present time.

There are two acknowledged principles in the philosophy of the human mind, which have an important connection with such belief. The first is, that we never can feel under moral obligation to do a thing which we believe impossible to be done. Now the popular doctrine, that no man ever has been sanctified or ever will be sanctified, till at the moment of death, places, in the view of the common mind, the opposite doctrine, viz. that sanctification is attainable at any period of life, in the light of an impossibility. The idea, that no man has been sanctified or will be sanctified till death, is inexplicable in the views of men generally, except on the ground that there is some insuperable obstacle in the way of it, although they may not readily perceive or explain what that obstacle is. The conviction of the impossibility of present sanctification will exist in the common mind as it has done in times past, just so long as the popular doctrine, that there have not been and never will be cases of it, prevails. And the consequence is, as might naturally be expected, that throughout a great proportion of the churches the sense of obligation to be holy is very feeble. It is not wrought into the mind; it does not weigh upon it heavily, and give it no rest. Nor is it possible on the principles of mental philosophy that it should, while the common notions on this subject remain. Now this great work of holiness, we venture to say, will never be accomplished in us without a deep sense of our obligation to be holy.

Another principle, involved in the philosophy of the mind, and having a connection with this subject, is this: No person, such is the relation between the will

and belief, can put forth a volition to do a thing, which at the same time he believes impossible to be done. I do not believe in the possibility of flying in the air; and I am unable to put forth a volition to do any such thing. I may exercise a *desire* to fly in the air; but while I have an utter disbelief in its possibility, I shall never put forth a volition to do it. So if I disbelieve in the possibility of being holy, I can never put forth a volition to be so. I may put forth a volition to do many good things; I may put forth a volition to grow in grace; but to put forth a volition, a fixed, unalterable determination to gain the victory, to be wholly the Lord's, to be holy, when I believe such a result to be unattainable, is what, on the principles of the philosophy of the mind, I am unable to do. I might as well put forth a volition to tumble the Rocky Mountains into the Pacific Ocean.

Now if these two philosophical principles have been correctly stated, first, that the sense of obligation to be holy at the present time will depend on a belief in the present attainableness of holiness; and, second, that the volition or voluntary determination to be holy now, necessarily presupposes the same belief; then we see very clearly the importance of being established in this doctrine. Who can expect to be holy now, and holy through his whole life, that does not feel the weight of obligation to be so? Still more, who can reasonably expect to be holy, that does not put forth a volition, a fixed, unalterable determination with divine assistance to be so? And if these, the obligation and the volition, depend on the antecedent belief, then evidently the first great preparatory step to a holy life, is to be fully settled in the doctrine;—in other words, to believe fully in the attainableness of holiness at the present time. Go, then, to the Bible. Go with a single eye. Go in the spirit of humble prayer. And see whether the Lord does not require you to be wholly his, in the exercise of perfect love;—and whether he has not, in the blood of his Son, made ample provision for it?

SECOND.—In answer to the question, how we may attain to holiness, we proceed to say, that a second indispensable thing is an act of personal consecration to God. Some confound such an act of consecration with the full or complete state of sanctification. But this should not be done. Sanctification is something more. Consecration is simply putting forth the volition, (a foundation for which is now laid in the belief of the duty and the attainableness of holiness,) the fixed unalterable determination, with divine assistance, to be wholly the Lord's. In other words, it is a fixed purpose, not to be altered during the whole period of our existence, to break off from every known sin; and to walk, to the full extent of our ability, in the way of the divine requirements. God recognizes the moral agency of man, fallen as he is; and very properly calls upon him and requires him to make this consecration, however unavailable it may ultimately be without his own accessory aid. Now it does not necessarily follow, because we put forth a determination to do a thing, that the thing is done; although it is certain that the thing will never be done without the previous determination. Such a consecration, therefore, extending to all that we are and all that we have, is necessary. And let it not be said, that we have no power to make it. We are speaking now of *Christians*, of persons in a justified state, whose dead wills have been partially quickened by the Holy Ghost, and who certainly can do something in this way. Such a consecration, therefore, is necessary.

And it is so, first, because we can have no available faith in the promises of God without it. It is a great complaint in the Christian church at the present day, that

there is a want of faith. If we may take the statements of Christians themselves, they do not *believe*; certainly not as they should do. And why is it? It is, because they have not fully consecrated themselves to God; in other words, they continue to indulge in some known sins. Such are the laws of the mind, that they cannot have full faith in God as a friend and father to them, so long as they are conscious of voluntarily sinning against him. The Saviour himself has distinctly recognized the principle, that faith under such circumstances is an impossibility. "How can ye believe, who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" If we seek the honor that cometh from God, in other words, if in the fixed purpose of our minds we consecrate ourselves to him, to do, as far as in us lies, his whole will, then, and not otherwise, we can believe that he will be to us, and do for us, all that he has promised in his holy word. It is precisely here as it is in the common life. It is impossible for us, in our intercourse of man with man, to believe that a man whom we deliberately sin against and injure, has confidence in us and loves us, provided we are certain that he has knowledge of the fact. The principle will be found to hold good in regard to God as well as man. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they had faith in God as their father and friend. But their faith failed as soon as they had sinned; and they immediately hid themselves from his presence. If we would have faith, therefore, we must endeavor by consecration to cease from all known voluntary sin. In entire accordance with these views are the remarkable expressions in the first epistle of John. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

An act of entire consecration is necessary, so far as it is in our power to make it, secondly, because we have no encouragement to believe that God will sanctify us in a state of spiritual darkness and of personal inactivity. As has already been said, God recognizes the moral agency of man, fallen as he is; and especially when, after having justified him by the application of the Saviour's blood, he has given him the principle of a new spiritual life. It is because he has given us the power of distinguishing between good and evil; because he has given us judgment and conscience and will; because he has breathed into us the breath of a new life; thereby putting us into communication with himself, and opening to us the fountains of everlasting strength, that he has the right and exercises the right of requiring us to surrender all to him. And if we find the attempt difficult, as no doubt on account of our lives we shall, he nevertheless requires that we shall do all that we can. And it is at this point, when we have put forth, with all the energy and sincerity of our being, the unalterable determination, relying upon divine assistance, that we will be wholly his, that he meets us. The two principles of entire consecration and of divine assistance to the full extent of the promises, go together. And both are embodied in that remarkable passage of scripture, which should be written upon the heart of every believer, "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

It will of course be understood, that in making this act of consecration, we have a sincere and earnest desire for holiness. We cannot suppose it possible that it should be made in any other state of mind.

THIRDLY.—A third thing requisite in order to present sanctification, is a full belief

in the faithfulness of God in relation to the fulfilment of his promises. Having believed, first, that holiness is a duty, and that provision is made for it; and having, secondly, consecrated ourselves to God in all things to do his will, we are now, in the third place, to have faith in him, that he will do what he has voluntarily assumed as his own part; in other words, that he will fulfil the promises which he has graciously made; that he will accept the sacrifice which we have deliberately laid upon his altar. This is oftentimes the most difficult thing of the whole. Some, it is true, believe easily—believe at once; and of course enter in at such an open door, that they are filled with surprise. But many stumble at this point. They feel the dreadful effects of former habits of mind. That old unbelief, which has so long kept them far from God, still clings to them. They say, is it possible that we can be sanctified in this way, so easy, so simple, that we stumble at its very simplicity? Must we again give all up, and feel that it is all of grace, our sanctification as well as our justification? We can receive it in no other way, and we can keep it in no other way than this. In no other way could God be glorified, or we be safe. The result of our consecration has been merely to put us in a situation where God can receive us; and he can receive us only in connection with our faith in him, not only as able and willing, but as actually doing it. We must trust ourselves in his arms, as confidently and as fully as when we first believed for forgiveness or justification. And it is here that we realize the full import of those striking passages of scripture, Mark xi. 24, "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." And 1st Epistle of John v. 15, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

A faithful and *persevering* application of the principles laid down in this number, attended with a reliance on God for his blessing, will result, we have no doubt, in leading persons into the narrow and holy way. We say *persevering* application, because in nothing is perseverance, a fixed tenacity of purpose, more desirable, than in the pursuit of holiness.

A. K.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

LETTER FROM A LADY TO HER FRIEND.

Agreeably to a promise made to you, my dear sister, to give you some of my experience on the subject of sanctification, I will by the assistance of the Holy Spirit comply with the request.

At the age of 15 my attention was called to the subject of religion. Being engaged in study, I let that engross my whole heart, and the Spirit was grieved. Three years after, the Spirit visited me again, and again was grieved to take his departure. A year or more had elapsed when I went to visit in the town of N—. While there I was invited to attend a protracted meeting, that was being held by

the Methodists ; the first sermon that I heard, the Spirit applied the truth, and I was led to realize my condition as a sinner before God. I had said to the Spirit again and again, Go thy way for this time. But now sin appeared in all its hideousness. I groaned beneath its weight, and was led to make the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved." I then in the strength of the Lord, made the decision, that I would serve him. It was then my troubled soul found peace in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence that I had of my acceptance was clear as the noon day sun. Religion became the all absorbing theme, and I felt it blessed to tell of Jesus's love, and for a long time my peace in Christ was abiding. After this I engaged in new scenes, and did not have my Saviour's presence as I had previously. There would be days when my happiness would be complete, and it was sweet to hold communion with God. I lived in this way for several years, sometimes on the mount, and then like Peter, following afar off ; and would weep before God that my Christian course was not more uniform.

In September, 1833, a brother who was a member of the church with which I was connected, whose heart was filled with love, who had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, came to converse with me on the subject of sanctification. He spoke of the love of Christ, of the fulness that was found in him, and of the provision that was made by him for the entire sanctification of all that would come to him. I was much interested in his conversation, but my heart was filled with unbelief, and I doubted that it could be possible for any one to live without sin. He saw me again, and obtained a promise from me that I would examine the subject, gave me Wesley's Plain Account, and requested me to read it in connection with the Bible. I immediately commenced the examination, asked the Lord to direct, that I might know the truth. He heard my feeble cry. I began to search the word of God ; thought I would mark every passage that had any bearing at all upon the point. In pursuing the examination, I found that the number of proofs increased, and if I would note any it must be the whole, for the Bible was full of it. Paul in writing of the love of Christ, said, "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity." "That if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." These and kindred passages made a strong impression on my mind, and I was led to believe that Christ's blood was sufficient to cleanse from all sin. But then, how to be kept from it ? I found it written, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." "The just shall live by faith."

That God had said, "This shall be the covenant that I will make

with them, when I shall take away their sin." "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." God had given us promises, that through them we might become partakers of the divine nature, that we should find his grace sufficient for us. I saw that this was to be obtained, and retained through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that it was through faith that we were to become victorious. I then became convinced that the doctrine of entire sanctification was plainly taught in the word of inspiration. I found that more was said on being cleansed from sin, than on being forgiven of it. I made my fulness known to the individual of whom I have spoken. He remarked, if you have a clear evidence of your justification, seek to have your heart purified. There seemed to be something so delightful in the thought of becoming pure within, that I felt a desire for it. As I looked into my heart, I found it was all uncleanness—nothing that was pure. I was led to ask myself, is it happiness you would seek? No, it was purity, it was holiness. I felt that I could not glorify God, could not labor in his service, unless my heart was cleansed from sin—until I had received the blessings of the new covenant.

When President Mahan came to this city, I went to hear him, and was blessed, but still I had not made that entire consecration which God required. I wanted faith to take hold of Christ. The brother that had labored with me, spoke of trusting in the Lord; how simple it was; and illustrated what it was to trust. Then the way was made plain. I visited President Mahan, had some conversation with him, and returned home, resolved that I would not leave my closet till the Lord had blessed me.

I then made an entire consecration of all to him, my time, my talents, influence, reputation, friends, all, all was laid on the altar, set apart for the Lord, to be wholly and for ever his, resolved that nothing should separate me from his love. As soon as this was done, the Saviour appeared. O the loveliness, the glory, that surrounded his character. I can give but a faint conception of it. I seemed to swim in a sea of glory, felt that I was on Tabor's holy mount; began to praise the Lord; felt that self had been dethroned, that I had relinquished my will for the Lord's. Christ had applied the cleansing virtue of his blood, and said to me, "Daughter, thy sins are all forgiven; go in peace, and sin no more." The fire of divine love had descended and consumed the sacrifice that had been laid on the altar, and I was wholly the Lord's. How sweet to feel that I have given all for Christ, that he has taken up his abode with me; that he has circumcised my heart to love him supremely! How abundant is the mercy that has been bestowed upon me, the unworthiest of creatures! How rich the benevolence that has been extended! The goodness of God is a spiritual sun-beam that melts my heart.

I look upon the power of God that has been displayed in the work of creation, feel that the word was mighty that called a world into existence, but nothing in comparison to what it was to redeem me from sin. I can, with the sweet singer of Israel, call on every thing that hath breath to "praise the Lord." I love the blessed doctrine of holiness, of perfect love, and bless the Lord that I have ever felt the power of it; that I can speak from sweet experience of its blessedness, of trusting in a present Saviour, that it is not the prospect of future happiness that fills my cup, but a present salvation, salvation from sin, a sinner saved by grace. O the sweetness of the song! To God be all the glory.

I have the witness of the Spirit that "All is well;" Christ saves me now. O the blessedness of that rest that I have in Christ. It is better felt than expressed. I live on him, and feel a sweet and holy sympathy with him for souls. It is my meat and drink to do the will of God. "Thy will be done," is the language of my heart, from moment to moment. The promises are a rich treasure, to which I can at all times resort, and look to God for a fulfilment of them. The love of Christ constrains me; I glory in nothing save in the cross of Christ. I have his presence, see his hand in every event of life, find it blessed to be led by his Spirit; have sweet communion with God in secret, talk with God, exercise living faith, come in Jesus's name; it is only "Ask and receive." My mind has dwelt much of late on the power to prevail with God. I think it is our privilege, and that we can have the evidence whilst we are pleading that the Lord will bless. The glory of God is written in living characters before me urging me onward. I can bless the Lord, and do praise him, that I have breathed the sweet air of liberty for over two years. Freedom! blessed freedom in Christ. I realize the blessedness of the promise, "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose soul is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Through Christ and through him alone I gain the victory; all my strength is in him. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." I reckon myself dead indeed unto the world, but alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his grace assisting me shall go on reckoning myself the Lord's. I love the communion of the saints; to converse with those that exhibit by their lives the power of holiness; for it is only by living the principles that men will take knowledge of this truth.

I do rejoice that the work of sanctification is progressing in our churches; that the Lord is raising up a holy people, those who will glory only in the cross of Christ; who will publish free and full salvation. Glory be to God in the highest strains.

Yours in the bonds of perfect love.

A CONGREGATIONAL SISTER.

Boston, March 31, 1841.

From Zion's Herald of Feb. 11, 1824.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Rochester, N. H., Jan. 28, 1824.

MR. EDITOR,—The following is a copy of a letter which I received when I resided in Boston, containing the experience of a young woman. By inserting it in the Herald, you will oblige a constant reader, and, perhaps, afford instruction and encouragement to many of those professors who are seeking for greater depths of humble love. J. H.

DEAR BROTHER,—Since I have thought of writing, in answer to your proposal, I have labored under a sense of my extreme inability, and have been almost ready to shrink from the undertaking. But at length I have broken through every objection, believing, through Christ strengthening me, I shall be able to declare what God hath done for my soul.

Five years previous to the time I was convicted for holiness, I experienced the pardoning love of God. I had not a doubt of my acceptance with him.

For nine months, I rejoiced continually, and obeyed the voice of the Spirit. I loved my Redeemer, and longed to depart and be with him, which I considered far better than life. After this I began to decline, and by degrees lost my enjoyment, and became formal and spiritless in my religious duties. Remains of sinful tempers began to trouble me, and I doubted my former experience. But though I was unhappy, and my heart unholy, yet I was enabled to live uprightly, as to my outward walk. At this time, the Rev. E. Hedding was stationed in this town [Boston.] I was reclaimed, and brought into liberty again; after which I retained a sense of my justification, till I resolved to seek for holiness of heart.

It is now full three years since I began to read the word of God carefully, diligently, and with prayer, to see if the doctrine of *Christian perfection* could be proved by it. I likewise took my pen, and marked every text in the New Testament which proved or favored that doctrine. After thus carefully examining the scriptures, I was convinced that this was purchased by the Saviour's death, and that God intended that we should be restored to his full image. I saw that he had promised it to us, and that he commanded us to be perfect. At this time my mind was greatly perplexed with doctrines. I read many books, and the different ideas and sentiments I met with greatly confused my mind. But the Lord, who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, in great mercy caused light to break in upon my mind and shine upon my path.

February 18, 1818, in prayer I cried to God that he would show me my state, earnestly entreating him to let me see all that was in my heart, when he inclined his ear and granted my request. But the sight made me tremble, and for a time almost threw me into despair. I found the remains of almost every sin in my heart; and groaning in this deplorable situation, I lost sight of Christ as my mediator. I struggled, mourning, weeping, prostrate on my face; for some time being tempted to think that my damnation was sealed. I lay, as it were, crushed under the mighty hand of God; for Christ my advocate was hid from my eye of faith. A sense of God's penetrating eye surveying my heart, beholding all, yea, more than I saw, sunk me down, and I appeared to myself as a mote; yet my sins appeared like mountains. But after all this, I saw that there was compassion in Jehovah; and soon my Saviour appeared to my view. I saw by faith that he loved me, and had given himself for me. I plainly saw that he had bought me with his own blood, and that his blood was sufficient to cleanse my polluted heart from every sinful temper—yea, from all sin. I could now cry for mercy, peace, and a pure heart. My soul was comforted, and a gleam of hope appeared.

But it was soon suggested, "All mankind will eventually be saved—why do you trouble yourself? You will lose your senses at this rate." This temptation brought darkness upon my mind, and I could not believe that all would be saved—there was no rest for me here. I cried to the Lord, and light broke in upon my mind. I said, "Lord, strengthen me, and open my way before me, and I will not rest until I obtain a clean heart." I opened the Bible (which lay before me) on these words (Rev. iii. 8), "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." This, and what followed, to the end of the chapter, greatly strengthened my faith, and I cried, "I will, I do believe; and my way shall be open from this moment." I resolved to obtain the blessing, at the expense of every thing else. From this time, I began to fast and pray, and to seek sincerely and earnestly for full sanctification. I strove to keep the whole law. I sought by works to subdue my sins, and conquer myself. But, alas! I grew worse; and my heart rose against God, because I could not conquer it. I asked, and obtained not. I strove, but did not receive the blessing. At times I was apprehensive I should never obtain my end. I gave way to temptation, and involved myself in many difficulties. I saw no power to live to God one day. I found indeed that I was weakness itself; and my sins appeared like mountains, separating between me and my God. But I had some comfortable seasons. I had now and then a taste of the little streams which flow from the great fountain of life and comfort. I had a little strength to keep my resolution, that I would have the blessing of sanctification,

at the expense of every thing, and deliverance from my Lord's enemies in my heart.

At one time, this text was brought with power to my mind, "You have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Sometimes Christ would fly over the mountains of my sins and transgressions to my soul, and for a short season would comfort me. Then again he would leave me in the dark, struggling with my temptations and troublesome forebodings of future things. I was in an agony, and knew not what to do. It appeared to me as though Satan led me captive at his will. One day, while contemplating upon the wretchedness of my condition, it came to my mind, as if spoken by a person standing by, "Read H. A. Rogers' Life." I arose from my meditations, and immediately obtained it. O! praise! praise! praise the Lord, that ever this precious book fell into my hands! I read it with prayer, and my heart opened to conviction; for I had done all that I could do, and was none the better, but rather grew worse, like the woman in the gospel, who, having spent all that she had, was at last glad to come to Christ for a cure. In like manner I came at last.

In reading Mrs. Rogers' letters, I saw that the way to obtain sanctification was by faith, and hereupon discovered my own error. I found my eyes quite imperfect, and that by works alone I could not obtain salvation from all sin. I resolved, however, not to lay works aside; but used the means, waiting at the foot of sovereign mercy, expecting to receive; for I was laid low, yea, in the dust I could lay my mouth, with my hand upon it, crying *unclean, unclean*. I saw the way I was to come, with all my pollution and unworthiness, and cast my soul upon Christ; and I believed that he would accomplish the work in me; that he would slay all my foes, and by his spirit and grace make me truly alive. Here grace and nature had many a struggle; but grace always prevailed. Self now appeared out of the question—nature and grace fought the battle; for I had given myself to God, in the name of Jesus Christ, to do with me as it pleased him.

I cried continually with many sighs and tears, "Give me thyself to know, from every sin set free: cleanse my heart, sanctify my nature." I could take no denial. I said, Give me this, or I die. Take every thing I possess, but give me an in-dwelling God. I must have this. Nothing short of this can satisfy my immortal mind. Lord, give me thy nature, thy perfect image.

"I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly saved from sin."

I had many temptations to think this was not the time; but in such a place, or in such a meeting; at home, in your closet, you will obtain. Notwithstanding the power of Satan to tempt, I was enabled

to look to God by faith, and wait patiently till the work was accomplished.

Whether at home or abroad, my language was still the same. One night in class, I felt my heart exceedingly hard; but it was soon melted before the Lord. After I got home these words were applied to my heart:

“ Dear Saviour, steep this rock of mine
In thine own crimson sea;
None but a bath of blood divine
Can wash my sins away.”

After this I resolved to open my mind to our minister, who had not preached this doctrine of holiness so explicitly and fully as he afterwards did. I went to his house, trembling, weighed down, fearing I should not be able to stand against the opposition I should meet with; for few fully believed the doctrine of heart holiness, even among the Methodists. I endeavored to tell him the exercises of my mind, and he explained some things, and prayed for me. While in prayer I shook exceedingly; and when we arose from our knees I found I had lost my burden, I felt neither sorrow nor joy. I went home much relieved. I had no sense of any thing, only my soul was delivered.

A day or two after this I began to think I had lost my convictions; and it appeared to me I had lost my earnestness for the blessing. I was somewhat alarmed, and feared I should not obtain what I so much desired. I retired, with a view to pray for conviction; and to my great surprise, when I came before the Lord, I could not feel distress; but the following words were set home upon my heart: “ Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” At this moment I was in Christ; every passion of my mind was at once laid even; and such a sweet stillness, such a peace, indeed like a river, or, like the waves of the sea, wave after wave, thrilled through my soul, as no tongue can tell or pen describe. I arose from my knees to see what it was, or from whence it came. I looked abroad upon the trees, and every leaf appeared awed into profound silence before the Lord; and all that I saw brought joy into my soul. The weight of love I realized was great indeed.

From this moment I had the witness that the work was done, and that God had full possession of, and dwelt in my heart. “ Know ye not that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost?” But again I erred; for I resolved to be cautious about telling of it. I thought I would see the fruits it produced, before I professed it. And although it is proper to be careful, yet it is the duty of sanctified souls, in simplicity and godly sincerity, to make known what God has done for them. I brought a dark cloud upon my mind by not professing it at a certain time, when it appeared my duty. But, as soon as I began

to declare what God had done for me, light shone upon my mind ; and from that time to the present, I have had the abiding witness of the same, except once for a few days, when under great weakness of body and severe trials of mind. I professed this blessing with great weakness, feeling my entire helplessness ; but in every instance when I have been called to profess or defend this glorious salvation, God has stood by me, and I believe he ever will. Though earth and hell should be engaged against me, they shall not prevail, while Christ is my strength and my shield.

Boston, March 1, 1821.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

HOLINESS IN PROSPECT OF DEATH.

DEAR BRETHREN,—I have long contemplated giving you a few thoughts for the Guide, but have delayed to do so from a conscious inability to do honor to such a hallowed theme as that of Christian holiness. The very echo of its name produces in my mind emotions unutterable, but especially so while I have viewed myself on the verge of time and in full view of a vast, boundless eternity. To describe the value and importance of holiness in such a situation, baffles human language. O that Christians realized while in health its vast importance ; then I doubt not few, if any, would regret at any time to meet the stern messenger of death. All would seek a preparation for the solemn event. O that I had realized its importance, and lived and enforced while in health, as I should have done, the blessed, momentous doctrine of salvation from all sin. Had I done this, I should not feel those regrets on account of neglected or half performed duty that I do now. Were I certain that I should never be permitted to utter but one more sentence to my fellow travellers to the eternal world it should be this : “ *Make earnest and continual ‘personal efforts’ for all the height and depth of gospel holiness.* ” “ Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” And what is done to obtain this inestimable blessing *must* be done speedily. Time is short. “ Behold, (says Jesus, who is to be our final judge,) I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.” This may be the last opportunity I may ever have to call on my dying fellow mortals to prepare to meet their God. If so, may it be known in eternity that some heeded my humble admonition, and sought while in health the blessing of holiness. May all who read these lines, pray for heaven’s continued blessings on their humble author.

B. S.

From the Maine Wesleyan Journal.

HOLINESS—WATCHFULNESS—PRAYER.

In my last, I mentioned what I thought one great cause of the want of holiness. In this I intend to show the necessity of watchfulness and prayer in order to be more holy. There is no Christian who lives without prayer ;—it is impossible ; it would be an anomaly of grace, to see a *Christian* living without prayer ;—but many live without watchfulness, or at most they watch but little. But what good will all of their prayers do, unless they watch. We are commanded to watch and pray, and watching comes before praying ; and all of our praying, without watching, will do little or no good.

There are many things against which we should watch ; and among other things, we should watch over the tongue ; for the apostle tells us that “ if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body ; ” and again, he tells us, “ the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity ; and that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature ; and is set on fire of hell.” From this we see the difficulty of governing our tongue, and ordering our conversation aright. It plainly implies that it is the most difficult of any duty that we have to perform ; and that he who can govern the tongue is a perfect man, and able to conduct himself aright in every other respect. How often do we see persons go to some interesting meeting, and get their souls blessed, and then go away and enter into such company, and conversation, as immediately destroy their peace of mind and confidence in God ; or they make no effort to keep themselves in the love of God ; no effort to keep the holy flame burning in their hearts ; they watch not at all, and soon lose the favor of God out of their souls. We can never be holy until we live religious when we are at home, and in company, as well as at church. We must watch also against unholy tempers, and evil thoughts, and give no place to the devil. We must watch over the holy flame that has been kindled in our hearts, as over some precious jewel that we are fearful of losing, or having stolen away ; and must watch that we do not grieve the Spirit of God, so as to lose it out of our hearts ; we must be always watching, and closely examining ourselves, to see if there be any sin yet working within our breast ; and he that will not watch thus, can never be holy, or grow in grace.

But we must pray as well as watch ; all of our watchfulness will only be human strength exerted against angelic power, unless we continually pray for grace and strength from above, and arm ourselves with all the panoply of heaven. We not only fail of watching, but we fail in our prayers. In the first place, we fail in the number, and

quantity of our prayers : we are commanded to "pray always, with all prayer, and supplication in the spirit." Again, we are commanded "to pray without ceasing." Now who of us prays as much as we are required to? Instead of praying always, many do not pray so often as David, who prayed three times a day. We are required to pray with *all* prayer, that is, all kinds of prayer, such as public, family, and private prayer : but many never pray in public, and some who are heads of families, do not pray in their families, and some do not even pray in secret. But those who calculate to be punctual to their devotions, frequently let the time pass, and neglect it, and possibly forget it ; and if they retire to pray, they are in such a hurry as to repeat, without feeling, a mere form of words, and they are glad when they get through. We are required to pray with supplication, which is understood to mean long and protracted prayers. We are much attached to protracted meetings, and if we were as fond of long and protracted prayers, especially in private, we should be more holy. Long prayers in public, without the spirit, are tedious, but in secret we may pray as long as we please, but in the spirit. If we supplicated the throne of grace with long, and protracted cries and wrestling in the spirit, God would hear our cries, and give us the desire of our hearts.

Secondly, we fail in the matter of our prayers ; says the apostle, "ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss." Our prayers are of too general character ; we pray for general blessings without condescending to ask for particular ones. For instance, do we pray for grace to order our conversation aright, that it may be seasoned with grace, meet to minister grace to the hearers? do we pray as our Saviour taught us, that God would lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from all evil? do we pray for grace to support us under temptations, that we may manfully resist them ; and that we may be holy in heart, life and conversation? We fail of asking enough at the hand of God ; he is as willing to bestow great favors as small ones ; but we are content to ask only for small favors, for a present blessing, or to be made happy ; and ask not for holiness. We should ask for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for God has said he is more willing to give it to them that ask for it, than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. Let us ask for this, and when we have the Holy Ghost in our hearts, we shall be holy.

Thirdly, we fail of asking in a proper spirit. They that worship God, must worship him in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeketh to worship him. There is too much formality in our prayers ; too much deadness, and lifelessness ; there is not a sufficiency of faith in exercise. We hurry through our prayers, so that our minds are discomposed, and rendered incapable of exercising faith in God. Our thoughts too, are often permitted to wander away from the ob-

ject of our faith, and that too, when we are engaged in the solemn exercise of prayer; we do not wrestle in the spirit as we should. We ought to feel that spirit of prayer, at all times, so as to be groaning after God; to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness. When we thus watch and pray, we may confidently hope to be made holy; then may we expect that our labors will be blest, and not till then.

ONESIMUS.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

RELIGIOUS MAXIMS,

HAVING A CONNECTION WITH HOLINESS.

XCIV.*

We may give up all outward things to God; we may surrender houses and lands, wife and children, and whatever else has a worldly value; but unless we give the heart with them, it is after all no real gift. It is a saying of William Penn, in that remarkable book of his, entitled "No Cross, No Crown," that "it is not the sacrifice that recommends the heart; but the heart, that gives the sacrifice acceptance.

XCV.

One of the blessed results of a life of entire religious consecration is, that it necessarily unites us to God. We cannot live, we cannot breathe, we cannot move, even for a moment, in the straight and narrow way, without the Divine presence and aid. A half-way Christian is living, or endeavoring to live, in his own strength; but the whole-hearted Christian lives wholly in the strength of God.

XCVI.

It was a saying among the fathers of the Christian church, "NOVIT RECTE VIVERE, QUI NOVIT RECTE ORARE." In English, "he knows how to live well, who knows how to pray well." And it will always be found, that he, who does not live a holy life, either prays amiss, or does not pray at all.

XCVII.

He who serves God perfectly at the present moment, though it be in a very small thing, such as the hewing of wood or the drawing of water, does in reality glorify him more than another, who is prospectively athirst and anxious for things of much greater consequence, but at the same time neglects or imperfectly performs his present duties.

XCVIII.

It is very desirable, that we should always keep ourselves in the order of God's providence; in other words, that we should receive things as they come, and do things as they are presented to us, in the spirit of Christian acquiescence and

* The Maxims in the April number were wrongly numbered. They should have been numbered from 78 to 93 inclusive.

thoughtfulness; for that is the only way in which we can truly recognize God as at the helm of affairs, or realize our own nothingness. Let us never forget, that God is competent to the direction of his own movements; and that whatever we may think of our own capabilities, he has other agencies in other situations. And what he requires of us, is to be and do just what he would have us, in his own providential time, in his own manner, and his own place.

XCIX.

Every thing that exists has its converging point, its elementary principle, its great centre. And when separated from the central tendency, it is necessarily upon a wrong track. The soul, therefore, whose tendencies are towards the world, can be at most only partially holy. The centre of the sanctified soul is the great God. To that it tends. In that it rests. Neglecting all other attractions, it aims earnestly after the divine mind. It is there, and there only, that it finds a present and everlasting home.

C.

The devil is very skilful in availing himself of particular or especial occasions. He has the sagacity to perceive, that it is of no use to throw arrows at the man whose armor is completely on. He therefore keeps himself at a distance, hides himself as it were, says nothing, does nothing. He is waiting to see the shield displaced or the helmet taken off. And he will be found returning suddenly and powerfully, and too often effectually, when the favorable opportunity presents itself.

CI.

He who keeps his ear open to calumny and backbiting, may reasonably expect to have it filled. The best way, both for our own sakes and that of others, is to keep it shut; to hear but little, and to pray the more.

CII.

It is important to remember, that the existence of holiness in the heart does not necessarily alter the manner of action, although it does the principle of action. The farmer and the mechanic plough their fields and smite their anvils as they did before; and if they are estimated by the outward action and the outward appearance merely, they are the same men in many respects as they ever were. But the difference internally, as it reveals itself to the eye of God who searcheth the heart, is as great as that between sin and holiness, between heaven and hell.

CIII.

Self-contrivances, in other words, calculations made in our own wisdom and strength, and for worldly purposes, are mournful evidences of unbelief and of a heart but partially sanctified. The sanctified heart has learnt the great lesson of a holy cessation from its own plans, and of a humble and patient waiting for the manifestation and forthcoming of the plans of God, that it may have the exceeding blessedness of cooperating with him; moving as he moves; going where he goes; stopping where he stops; knowing that he careth for us; and that our bread and water are safe in his hands. "*He that believeth shall not make haste.*"

CIV.

Often, amid the duties and distractions of the day, it is impossible for us to visit our usual place of retirement. It is important, therefore, if we would realize the benefits of closet worship when our closets are necessarily closed to us, that we

should form the habit of interior retirement and of recollection in God. Can it be doubted, that it is our privilege, by means of suitable religious training, accompanied with divine assistance, to remove in a moment every troublesome thought; and retiring inward, to hold communion with God in the secret chamber of the soul? Thus in every place, however disturbed by noise and perplexed by business, we may find a place of inward seclusion, a *spiritual closet*, where God will meet us with his heavenly visitations.

CV.

God is not a God afar off. He is ever present, ever near. But how can he be near us, and not be known? How can he be present, and not be felt? It is because we have blocked up the door of our hearts with the rubbish of the world. It is because the visitant is more ready than the host. It is he, and he only, who is willing to clear the door of entrance, that will find the divine glory coming in.

CVI.

If, as the wise men of the world assure us, "knowledge is power," the Christian can assert with still greater truth, that *holiness is power*. But holiness wins its victories, not by the accessory aids of cunning devices and of artificial eloquence; but by its own intrinsic excellence. It is gentle in its language, and mild in its gesticulation; but the energy of the great God is heard with transcendent efficacy in its still small voice.

CVII.

There is a remarkable expression of the Saviour, and worthy of serious consideration, viz: "*I can of mine own self do nothing.*" John v. 30. Hence the voice from heaven recognizing the paternal care over him, and saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Hence the interesting statement, that Jesus, who had his weeping infancy and his helpless childhood, "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Hence the Saviour's disposition to go apart into gardens and forests and mountains, that he might hold communion with God in prayer. Hence, in the mount of transfiguration, the appearance of Moses and Elias, who "spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Hence the appearance and the ministration of angels, who appeared to him and administered to him after the temptation in the wilderness and in the agony of the garden. But if the Saviour, in his human nature, was thus dependent on the Father, deriving all things from him and able to do nothing of himself, who among his followers can hesitate for a moment to acknowledge his own littleness and dependence? Who can doubt, that, whatever religious light and strength he has, comes from God? Who will not rejoice in the "*All of God, and nothing of the creature?*"

CVIII.

Amid all the trials of life, amid the rebukes, calumnies, and persecutions of evil men, in seasons when Satan seems to triumph, there is one great consideration which ought to tranquillize and elevate the Christian mind; and that is, that God, who sees the end from the beginning, will glorify himself, and will make even the wrath of his enemies to praise him.

T. C. U.

DR. POND ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

We hardly need stronger proof that the subject of entire sanctification is arresting the attention of the church, and gaining an influence, than that our opponents have taken the field, with their mightiest men in the van of the battle. Among their productions is a sermon by Dr. Pond, Professor of Theology, Bangor, Me., the evident design of which is to counteract the influence of those eminent men of the Congregationalist church, who entertain such views as are maintained by the Guide. On

Eph. v. 1. 2. "Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given himself for us."

He "I. Describes Christian Perfection.

"II. Inquires whether any of our fallen race have ever been, or are like to be perfect, in this life."

After describing the requirements of the text, and defining the doctrine of Christian perfection as he understands the Bible, the Dr. makes the following important admissions.

A state such as this is certainly a very *desirable* one. What Christian would not wish to come at once into "a *confirmed* state of perfect holiness," and to enjoy henceforth, as long as he lives, the "all pervading influence of pure and perfect love?"

It is moreover a state altogether within the scope of our *natural ability*, and to which we are directed by many of the *commands* and *exhortations* of scripture. "Be ye, therefore, *followers of God*, as dear children, and walk in love." "Let us cleanse ourselves from *all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness* in the fear of God." "Be ye therefore *perfect*, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect."

I will further add, that this is a state, for the attainment of which complete and ample *provision* is made in the gospel. The blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse from all sin. The motives and influences of the gospel are sufficient, if duly regarded and received, to bring us at once into a state of perfect and unending holiness. I say, to bring us into this state *at once*—the *next moment*; so that we are culpable, and alone culpable, for all our present imperfections.

But notwithstanding all this, he maintains that no one ever has, or ever will, in this life, attain to that blessed state, provided for and required in the gospel. They who profess to have arrived at a state of entire sanctification are "pretenders." And he strongly intimates that their profession of such a blessing is at the instigation of the devil.

We should hardly expect the following sentiment from any one who feels constrained to teach that men are able, and in duty bound, to be holy, *now*.

I do not say, certainly, that that form of perfectionism which has

been discussed this evening is a delusion of the devil ; for I do not pretend to be enough acquainted with his plans and operations to speak positively on such a subject. But I do say, that if he were disposed and permitted to lead some of our best Christians astray, to their hurt, I know not with what bait he would be more likely to draw them aside, than with this. Of course, he would not try to lead them into any gross immorality—or damnable heresy. He knows that he should not succeed in any such effort, and he has too much cunning to attempt it. But he throws out before them the lure of a fancied perfection—persuades them that it is of no difficult attainment—they have only to put forth one strong act of faith, and the intervening hindrances are all overleaped, and the inviting summit is gained at a bound. Well, this is a fine, enchanting theory. This is a glad discovery indeed. One after another looks at it, and is captivated. One after another makes the required effort, and fancies he has gained the prize. He is now perfectly holy. He is as free from sin as are the angels in heaven. And he rejoices in the confidence that his whole spirit, and soul, and body, are to be preserved blameless, unto the coming of the Lord Jesus. Meantime, his wily adversary chuckles, and rejoices over him. He has him in a situation now, where, if he cannot destroy him, he can essentially injure him. He can clip his wings, and curtail his influence. He can infuse the leaven of pride into his heart, obstruct his efforts to be useful, and retard him in his growth and preparation for heaven.

The sermon contains, as we think, many inconsistencies in the application of scripture, and detached sentences from writers on Christian holiness. They may be noticed hereafter, but at present we have only room for a few remarks which we wish to make on the above quotations.

1. While we teach that men may be entirely sanctified in this life, we place no dependence on our natural ability. If Dr. Pond means that we can love God with all the heart, unaided by the Holy Spirit, we object to the sentiment. No man can is go to Christ except the Father draw him ; without Christ we can do nothing. It by our own effort, assisted by the Spirit, that we come to Christ ; and by the same means do we remain in him.

2. It is not our opinion, nor that of Mr. Mahan, whom Dr. P. quotes, that a person, made the partaker of perfect love, is brought to a state of confirmed holiness, if by it is meant, that we cannot depart from that love. In our consecration we give up all, and for life. We could not look for a blessing without so doing. We may continue in that state ; we have every inducement to do so ; but still we must take heed lest we fall. Our work is not done when we are sanctified. We shall then feel the more necessity of watching unto prayer, and of growing in grace ; not that our grace may be made better in kind, but more in degree. But if we *now* love God with all the heart ; if we do all things with an eye single to his glory, we have the perfection required.

3. It is generally admitted that the more grace one has, the more will he realize his own weakness, and the need of help from above : how then can Dr. Pond think we

should be proud of our attainments? or does he not allow with Dr. Woods, that any of these brethren have been specially favored of the Lord? The language adopted by our friends who profess to be sanctified is—

“O glorious change! 'tis all of grace,
By bleeding love bestowed
On outcasts of our fallen race,
To bring them home to God;
Infinite grace to vileness given,
The sons of earth made heirs of heaven.”

Will such sentiments inspire pride? Will the adversary “chuckle” at our giving glory to God for the destruction of his works?

4. Dr. P. admits that the state some profess to have attained, is a desirable one, that God requires it, that ample provision is made for it in the gospel, that we may have it at once, and that we are culpable if we do not attain it. How is it, then, that he feels constrained to answer, that no one ever has, or is likely to have this blessing in the present life? Should not charity rather constrain us to believe that those men of God, who were moved by the Holy Ghost to declare the privileges of the gospel, did avail themselves of those privileges? Does it not seem to imply rebellion against God, to say that no *one* ever will love him with all the heart, in this life? Reader, it is your duty to be holy. God commands it. He has made ample provision for it in the gospel. Now dare you say, I shall not be holy here? Take care. Let us not heed the traditions of men, but “be followers of God as dear children, and walk in love.”

We have put some notices on the second page of our cover, relative to payments and discontinuances, to which we would call immediate attention. Will our subscribers have the goodness to read them, carefully.

